

# Dragon's Bloodline

(竜の血脈)

Volume 08

The Millennium

Yan Mao

(彦猫)

## Story Description:

A martial artist (42 years old, single) devoted himself and trained his skill with the sword and martial arts, but was involved in a large scale disaster, and saved many people before his life ended. Who would have thought that when he went to the world of the dead, a beautiful woman who introduced herself to be General Administrator would appear? He was told that it was possible to reincarnate into a world of swords and magic, and the man gained the powerful Gift [Dragon's Bloodline]. However, he reincarnated as a woman. Furthermore, a beautiful woman. In order for him to walk down the warrior's road to recover his symbol of being a man, he made a fresh start as a woman. Shall we go on an adventure? Let's begin!

Original Story can be found here: [Link](#)

# Chapter 96: The Demons' Invasion

Not long after the permafrost's ice melted.

The observatory installed on Sacred Mountain Cyrus' hillside discovered an army corps of demons from beyond the horizon.

Their numbers were uncertain. 100,000? 200,000?

A soldier on watch responded to headquarters as such.

"There are so many enemies, enough that the ground doesn't look black! Seven parts enemies, three parts black. I repeat, seven parts enemies, three parts black!"

Clad in mirror-polished armor, trolls and orcs formed ranks as they marched towards the fort. Their appearance was obviously unlike that of one thousand years before. It was as Azel feared.

(This... this was the source of your confidence, wasn't it? Ars!)

As the large demon army stood before the small fort, a dark elf—a demon with the same kind of vocal organ as a human—began recommending for its capitulation.

According to the dark elf, if they relinquished their arms and offered provisions, they promised to not bring harm to their civilians nor bring violence to the fort.

It wasn't as though the humans believe them, so they used the three days they were given properly.

They appealed to the nearby Holy City to dispatch a holy chivalric order and had their mages raise the ramparts as much as possible.

However, once the third day passed, they realized that it was all for naught.

"W-what's that..."

"A giant..."

The gigas tribe. Although not quite as gargantuan as a cyclops, they were

giants that had enormous bodies. One of these were rushing towards the fort.

Wooden walls and the like weren't even an obstacle for something like it.

The demon forces used the hole it created to invade. Tens of thousands of soldiers flooded into the fort that could have only housed a few thousand at best.

The fort fell within the day.

After that, the demon army divided into three forces.

One force would establish an encampment around the fort while the other two would advance by detouring east and west around the Sacred Mountain.

The forces that advanced along the east side of it were stopped by the combined armors of the Magic City and the Sacred City. Rather, they stopped voluntarily.

The demon army's western force cut through the forest, making a path and, much like Cordova's troops had, circumvented the Sacred Mountain.

Coming to that situation, the Magic City used a great magic.

Meteor Shower.

Summoned through a ritual that took many mages, meteors showered down directly upon the demon army.

"Ooh!"

"It's here!"

Azel was calm as he stood among the various officers who were in an uproar on the castle walls.

(It's too weak. They've also come prepared for it.)

True, it did injure and kill several thousand. However, for invoking a magic like that, it was merely several thousand.

By the time they could use the magic again, the enemy's vanguard would

probably have already reached Magic City's walls. And that was with the magic-skilled dark elves, vampires, and nagas not even having made their appearance yet.

If it turned into a siege, the city would fall in no time. This was clear to him with his experience from the last time this happened a thousand years before.

(How much damage will they deal? Should I send the citizens away...?)  
“What... is that...?”

A group of things appeared from the forest.

Although they looked like golems at a glance, they were much too large to be a golem, as well as too agile.

(Are those—!? Impossible! He'd progressed far enough to mass produce them!?) At that moment, Azel knew that the Magic City would fall.

\*

Those few dozen things weren't golems. They were robots.

The demon army's trump card, created with the fusion of science and magic.

“Intercept them!”

“It's useless! Quickly!”

“We can't make it!”

The rampart was quickly overrun by the robots that possessed a speed several times faster than a horse's.

The officers were safe due to hurriedly taking shelter. However, the mental shock was massive.

Despite the fireballs assailing them, the robots continued their offensive.

“A thousand years, huh...”

Azel suddenly muttered.

In one thousand years, humans waged wars, brought peace, then fought

again. Somewhere inside that cycle, they found time to develop.

However, it was obviously different for the demons. They were fundamentally a civilization created to fight, created for this purpose.

This was no time to be assaulted by the sense of defeat. Even if Azel was fine dying here, he couldn't allow the citizens to suffer.

"Non-combatants are to fall back to the academy! Mages are to work at repairing the damaged walls!"

Fortunately or not, the robots did not enter through the walls after destroying them. They simply retreated.

Perhaps the demons were attempting to tire them out, or perhaps it was to demonstrate their power. If anything, it felt more like the latter.

Why? Because Magic City wasn't able to put up a fight. Perhaps only several high ranking mages would be able to, as well as Azel himself.

Although the robots assaulting them had lower magical resistance than the one the Demon King himself used, most ordinary magic wouldn't affect them at all.

And their armor. Ordinary weapons very likely wouldn't even be able to leave a scratch on them.

Even if it was the holy sword that Thor used, it wouldn't be able to do its full damage.

\*

Three days later, the main force of the demon army arrived.

The recently restored walls were destroyed once again by giant races. Numerous races like orcs and goblins streamed in through the destroyed walls. [1]

It was complete havoc.

"Surrender! Those who surrender will be guaranteed their life!"

Although a female dark elf general named Rei called out, no humans surrendered to the demons.

All they felt towards demons was a mix of fear and hatred.

In the end, only those who had fainted or had lost the ability to fight were taken as captives.

“Find the Great Sage! If it is his will, the humans will surrender!”

Although there weren't many of them in the demon army, it did have human troops.

They attempted to persuade their fellow humans that had locked themselves away in their homes to live together with both humans and demons in the demon territory.

However, this also ended in failure. The humans' emotions were simply too biased against demons.

They chose death over being humiliated. There were dozens of soldiers, as well as civilians, that chose it.

Seeing that, Rei bit her lips. What was occurring was as her beloved Demon King said would happen.

Humans had to try to assimilate with demons.

So from the demons' point of view, they had to make them assimilate, even if it was by force.

To do that, they had to win the war.

It was all as he said.

“Listen well. I will bring back with the sacred knights and the army that was dispatched to the each. So until then, absolutely do not act rashly. Even if you become a prisoner, I will definitely rescue you.”

What Azel said to the captain of the garrison that held the academy was something that even he himself didn't believe.

The Demon King had certainly given those orders to the demons. Assimilating with humans, that was the Demon King's ideal.

However, Azel didn't believe that that ideal had spread its way through all of the demons' society. Humans were creatures that would even wage

war amongst themselves, after all.

He knew, but right now, Azel had chosen to flee. He had to inform everyone of their enemy's strength.

Could they win if they were informed?

It was unlike one thousand years ago. If they didn't have Dark Dragon Valis's strength, the humans winning this war was likely impossible.

Even while thinking that, Azel danced through the skies, heading first towards the east.

\*

Humans were foolish. This is what Rei believed.

Why would they foolishly choose their own death? Even if it was tiny, should they not cling to that speck of hope?

No, she changed her mind.

Everything was given by the Demon King.

Initially, he coerced them through force.

Then after that, he ruled them through law.

And now, he guided the demons through things known as ethics and morality.

Or, perhaps, that was exactly what should be called the authority of the Demon King.

Once the demon army invaded into the city area, they first raided their food stocks.

The amount of food necessary to maintain a host numbering into a million was just barely able to be transported by the demon territory.

Therefore, together with procuring food on the march, the demon army thought to introduce an experimental colonization system.

Originally, most goblins were omnivores, as well as orcs. It was common sense to feed a large number of people with grain rather than with meat.

Meanwhile, it was obvious that the human forces stationed in the academy would run out of food sooner or later.

Nevertheless, they held hope that Azel would come back with reinforcements from the Sacred City and clung to their vain delusions.

In truth, at that moment, the army that Magic City had sent towards the east as well as the reinforcements from the Sacred City were facing off against a demon army numbering upwards of one hundred thousand on the eastern side of the Sacred Mountain.

No matter how large Magic City and Sacred City were, there was a limit. They couldn't oppose the demon army of one hundred thousand.

In the end, Azel abandoned Magic City.

Magic City's dispatch had merged together with Sacred City's.

As they were, there was the danger of getting pincer attacked, so they had no other choice.

The people that had barricaded themselves inside of Magic City's academy lasted for half of a month.

However, the dark elf woman that was the enemy's commander came unarmed in order to enter negotiations, eventually leading to their surrender.

Those who surrendered weren't treated with any particular cruelty and were instead given a thin rice gruel and collected into one place as they were beforehand.

As the ones bringing them their food were good spirited goblins and amiable kobolds, the distance between them gradually closed.

Before long, soldiers that were guards or seriously wounded joined in with them. Once they'd learned that they would receive caring treatment, they found it practically impossible to continue holding their malice.

Even so, as there were many people that had lost loved ones to them, it still took time.

On a certain day, an earl that had survived by chance asked a question to



the dark elf that was their commander.

“Dark Elf-dono, what do you seek from us?”

The dark elf first gave her name.

“I am Rei Bradford.”

And so Rei then told him of the Demon King’s ideals.

Human-demon symbiosis.

It sounded like a story from a fantasy.

However, it had already been successful in the demon territory.

That’s why there were humans among the demon forces as well.

Having lost his son in the war, this was something the earl could appreciate.

On that day, Magic City capitulated in the truest meaning of the word.

\*

Footnotes:

1. From what I can tell, ‘giant races’ might be referring to a single ‘giant tribe’, but it also might be referring to ‘gigas tribe + others’.

# Chapter 97: Jaeburg Invaded

On that day, an army was discovered heading towards Jaeburg from far away on a mountain road.

This was something that had already been anticipated, so it was immediately reported and relayed all the way to Manesh.

Their numbers: tens of thousands.

As they were arriving through a mountain pass, their numbers were much smaller than the force that had assaulted Magic City. However, it was more than a sufficient force to overwhelm Jaeburg.

Moreover, there was a huge robot painted in crimson within the force.

“They’re here, eh...”

As the person taking command of Jaeburg’s army, Vargas kept his worries to himself.

He’d been told by Ria to not launch the first strike. Even if he ignored her, he wouldn’t be of the mind to do so anyways.

However, when the demon army made camp, they did so surrounding Jaeburg.

The next day, Ria and Carla flew over from Manesh. They literally came flying.

Then, having waited until nightfall, the demon army sent an envoy forward.

Among the envoy was a girl with flaxen-hair, the vampire, Asuka.

“My bad, making you wait till a time like this.”

That was the first thing she said. Like all vampires, even a strong vampire like Asuka was unable to move sufficiently in daylight.

They were in a tent built midway between the demon army’s encampment and Jaeburg’s city gate.

From Ogress’ side, there was Ria, Carla, and several bureaucrats. From

the demons' side, there was just Asuka and a few people that appeared to be military officers.

“Before we talk, I'd like to ask about something from three years ago. That werewolf incident, what were his intentions back then?”

Ria's voice was laced with anger. After seeing her most important person being destroyed, there's no way she couldn't be angry about it.

“That... was unfortunate. Even we weren't keeping a watch on that... His Majesty was waiting for the last moment, just in case.”

The person who stopped Ria's katana definitely was the Demon King. With the timing he used there, he likely could have saved Carla as well.

However, Ria wouldn't consent to that.

“To be honest, I am at a loss at whether we should put our faith in a Demon King who keeps a thing like that.”

“I also think that that thing should have died sooner... Well, his loyalty towards His Majesty was certain, though. Also, even someone like that had a family...”

So he had a family?

Even despite being like that, he had a family.

Ria, now a parent, began to pity the family he left behind just a little.

“He had thirteen wives and twenty-five children, I think?”

Correction. She didn't pity him at all.

“The heck? He was just a lustful man.”

Ria said that, yet she already had three wives and four children.

Behind her, Carla's expression still hadn't changed.

“So, what are your demands?”

The related party, Carla, continued the discussion. That was already in the past. For her, it was done and over.

Hearing her words, Asuka's expression relaxed.

“We do not wish to war with humanity.”

That was the truth. The lie detection magic that Carla used in secret didn't go off. There was the possibility that she had tricked it, though.

“We want the land in the vicinity of this mountain. We plan on cultivating the area, turning it into a city.”

That wasn't a lie either. Then again, if this vampire girl lied to them, it would quickly be appear on her face.

“Also, we'd like you to recognize our ability to live together with humans.”

“Hmm...”

Ria's head was filled with thoughts on the matter. Living together with demons. In these past few years, Ria had thought about it the whole time.

It would cause the matter with Carla to be set aside, but once she calmed down, even if she fought against them right now, it would very likely lead to a massive amount of losses.

Besides, there was one thing she worried about over all else.

“Right now... where is the Demon King?”

That was the most important piece of intel there was.

If he was watching this meeting nearby and saw Ria and Carla alone crush the demon army, he would likely swoop in to attack. As the two would be exhausted, it would be unlikely that they could win against him.

If it would turn out like that, ignoring what Ria wanted or didn't want, there'd be no choice but to accept the demon army's points.

“That is... something that even I don't know.”

Her voice turned into a whisper. However.

“However, he is doing something that is absolutely necessary. That is just how His Majesty is.”

Her words had placed absolute trust in him.

Ria didn't have many choices.

To be exact, it was just whether or not they would fight.

If it came to a fight, it would be simple. If Ria and Carla joined up with Jaeburg's war potential, even with this vampire that had become their acquaintance fighting against them, there's no way they would lose. Even so, there would certainly be sacrifices in doing so.

Ria did not want to allow there to be those sacrifices.

"I will approve of you making a city. However, there will some conditions that benefit us."

Asuka urged her on in silence.

"First off, we will not allow the construction of a rampart. This is in order to prevent it from being used as a military base if it comes down to it. Something at the level of a fence is fine."

"Alright. And?"

"We'll concede land, but it will be a place a little ways away from Jaeburg. This is to allow for our side to put our defenses in order in case something happens."

"That's alright too."

Unlike Ria and Asuka, the subordinates behind them were getting nervous.

"That this one might become the biggest problem..."

Ria stared at Asuka. It was a stare as though to say she wouldn't forgive any lying.

"Until we reach the point that it is deemed safe, I would like to take a few hostages."

Asuka sighed, nodding.

"Understood. I'll go along with some others that you pick."

"No, not you. You're too strong."

That part took Asuka by surprise.

“For hostages... would the guys standing behind you be alright?”

“Eh? No, that would be troubling. Without them, our forces would stop functioning.”

There were orcs and goblins amongst them, but they were probably staff officers.

“Then I guess just you is fine? You’re weak in the daytime at least.”

\*

Like that, in Year 3003 on the Continental Calendar, a non-aggression arrangement under the name of the Jaeburg Treaty was signed between Ogress and the demons.

Although this treaty was only meant to last for a single year’s time at first, this would be decided to be extended through both parties’ mutual consent.

Having many strong races, the demons immediately built a settlement one day’s walk away from Jaeburg.

Along with that, the demon army that had been surrounding Jaeburg moved to cultivate land that had been conferred to them by Ria.

Ria herself watched over it.

Before long, it was arranged that caravans would go from Jaeburg to the demon settlement.

Initially, Ria or Carla would travel together with them. This was in order to act as a deterrent in case anything happened.

However, truly, nothing happened at all.

The demons silently cultivated the land. Using methods that humans didn’t know about, they were able to produce crops in an area that was thought to be barren.

Living in Jaeburg, even Asuka was docile. She would sometimes be lead around by those watching over her to look around the human town.

However, this was only ever done during the daytime so that she couldn't use her powers as a vampire.

In this way, the days passed by calmly.

A piece of information arrived from Manesh.

Serge had returned home.

When she first heard about this, Ria was happy.

However, once she heard that Serge wanted Ria, Carla, and Guinevere to meet him as soon as possible to talk about something, her expression turned into a doubtful one.

She had been regularly receiving letters from Serge.

And yet this was an urgent request.

She had a bad feeling about this.

"Asuka, can I bring you somewhere?"

"I don't mind, but is it alright with you all?"

"It would be too dangerous to leave you here."

Currently, the robot that would only work with Asuka was sitting in a tent that had been set up inside Jaeburg.

If she used that to battle, it alone would be able to annihilate Jaeburg.

She trusted Asuka, but it was the responsibility of a ruler to consider any possibilities.

Ria, Carla, and Asuka flew through the sky towards Manesh.

When they arrived at the royal castle's courtyard, Ria saw a nostalgic face.

"Nee-chan!"

However, the only thing nostalgic was his face.

Serge had completely outstripped Ria in height.

"You grew pretty tall."

He looked to be above 170 cm. Even though Ria was tall for a woman, she wasn't that tall.

"I have a lot to talk about, but first... why is Asuka-san with you?"

The sun had already gone down, there wasn't even any afterglow from it. Otherwise, Asuka wouldn't be able to fly.

"If me being here is bad, would you let me look around?"

"No... rather, I'd like to hear about how much you demons know about this as well."

Guinevere joining up with them, the five gathered in the castle's parlor.

Seeing him stay silent as though being careful to not say anything, the others thought something was strange.

"Where should I start..."

Serge seemed to be hesitant. His expression no longer held any vestiges of his former childish youth. It had matured.

"Start with the conclusion. We can go from there."

Ria urged him. Serge was happy that her frankness hadn't changed.

"I'll say it, then."

Even so, he gulped before continuing.

"If we continue on how we are right now... humanity—no, the world will be destroyed."

It was the truth about the Great Collapse.



# Chapter 98: Delving the Dark Labyrinth Once More

“What are you talking about?”

The person to say that was the one who was closest to being an outsider here, Asuka.

“The Millennium is clearly about the demon’s invasion. However, His Majesty have been thinking about a way for humans and demons to live together.”

“You’re wrong. It’s not like that. I’ll go over it from the start.”

And so, first, Serge told everyone that he became a Great Sage.

Everyone was surprised by that, but it wasn’t his main point.

“When I became a Great Sage, I learned the past 3,000 years’ history... in other words, the remaining records of the human race were passed on to me.”

With that, Serge spoke about something that they hadn’t found strange thus far.

“Nee-chan, how do you think humans evolved in this world?”

This wasn’t something that Ria had thought about at all.

Archaeology hadn’t developed at all. The temples said that God created mankind, but as a reincarnator, she knew that was false.

“3,000 years ago, there weren’t any humans in this world.”

If that was the case, where did humans come from?

“The way humans came to this world was through the Great Collapse. Around ten thousand of them in total.”

The Great Collapse.

They already knew what would happen in the Millennium. Looking for food and hoping for land, demons would flood in.

However, Valis hadn't said anything concerning the Great Collapse.

"From here on, my conjectures will be mixed in. If there's anyone that doesn't want to hear it, well..."

Even though he said that, no one made a move to stand up and leave.

The mystery behind this world's establishment was about to be revealed.

Sighing, Serge spoke.

"If humans and demons don't kill each other to the absolute limit in the Millennium to circulate souls, the power that causes this world to exist would be lost, causing a Great Collapse."

This was an opinion that countered the Demon King's, whose opinion was that they should live together.

"So."

Within the silence, Guinevere spoke.

"This Great Collapse... what is it?"

"It isn't stated exactly within the records, but it is likely a literal world collapse. Not islands, not continents, no. This planet itself."

The planet's collapse.

Well, that would be a Great Collapse.

"But it's strange. The Demon King fought together with Valis a thousand years ago, he couldn't not know that. Knowing about it, he shouldn't want to promote something so simple as a human-demon symbiosis plan."

Ria's doubts were on track here as well. Serge sighed again.

"Yeah, that's something I myself don't understand. Therefore, we need to meet it again." [1]

It. The existence that knew about all of this.

He had to meet Dark Dragon Valis.

\*

The current state of affairs that was them vacating the country was

considerably difficult. However, even so, they left it to Guinevere.

The members that would be re-challenging the Dark Labyrinth were as follows: Ria, Serge, Carla, Irina. Just these people were more than enough.

In addition to them, first was Asuka. As a member of the demon's side, she wanted to go at all costs.

There was one more person, someone who absolutely wouldn't take no for an answer.

That person was Chris.

"Show us how you look after your wife."

Chris responded to Ria's banter seriously.

"I'm not his wife yet. Besides, I need power."

Concerning Chris, the other members were generally alright with it.

As she was a mage that could take out a Hydra, she probably wouldn't hold them back.

However, Serge definitely didn't want Chris to accompany them.

If she met Valis, she would hear about what they were discussing. For a normal person, it would no doubt be a terrible burden.

There was something else besides that.

He'd be troubled if there was yet another woman in this—other than him—female-only group.

Well, the only one that could be called a true woman would be Asuka though.

She was a beauty that fit Japanese aesthetics. At least, she looked like that to Serge. She'd probably fall in Ria's strike zone.

However, he was forced to give up in the end. At times like this, men were truly weak against women.

"You'll protect me, right?"

She said it like that, so he had no choice but to protect her. As a man.

Unexpectedly, Irina couldn't fly.

Of course, she could fly if she returned to her Dragon form, but because of that, she hadn't learned how to fly.

Other than her, everyone could fly—Chris included. That said, they would have to travel on land so that Irina could keep up, which would take up valuable time.

There, Serge's new magic showed its effect.

"Summon Wyvern."

Irina took off her armor and got on the back of the summoned Wyvern. Serge temporarily took charge of her armor.

Within that night, the group finally arrived at the Dark Labyrinth.

There were no other explorers in the entrance hall.

With the demon army so close by, they probably didn't even feel like delving into a labyrinth.

The party began to explore the labyrinth after a brief rest.

"Hasn't the path changed since the last time we were here?"

The person Ria asked was Irina, but had obviously changed from asking Serge after seeing his expression.

"I think Valis-chan changed the insides after Ria and everyone beat it back then."

That made sense. If they knew the map all the way inside, any further 'exploration' would basically be a single path in.

So she could do something like that as well? As expected of a God Dragon.

But in this situation, it was just a hassle.

"Irina, do you know any shortcuts?"

"Uu... there are, but I don't remember... sorry."

Unusually, Irina apologized.

Ria sighed.

“Oh well. It’s been a while, so how about we explore the labyrinth while raising that Ojou-chan’s level?”

Even though she said ‘oh well’, it felt more like she was a bit glad.

\*

Chris misunderstood.

She’d thought that, just a bit, she’d gotten strong.

That was a mistake.

She knew what true strength was now after coming to this labyrinth.

Severing a Hydra’s neck in a single blow, its scales easily pierced through by magic.

They could repel magic creatures simply by bombarding it with more magic and tear through Golems like they were made of paper.

Taking part in such a ludicrous group, Chris was outperformed in her primary role.

It was said that the main reason that levels would raise was the Magic Source that composed living creatures, but it was also often said that the person who got the attack in that ended its life would gain the most.

In fact, one would feel power flow into themselves each time they defeated a powerful enemy.

At the same time, the other five people killing enemies with her... just how strong were they?

“You are really are out of the standard. That boy in particular. He’s grown so much that his old self can’t compare at all.”

Saying that, even Asuka was clearly stronger than she’d been before. It was rather rare for an existence that had already lived for so long to have such a rapid growth.

“Well, I did a bit of something.”

After obtaining the title of Great Sage, he changed that knowledge into power and killed monsters with experimental magic.

If you simply raised your level by killing monsters, that would also make you strong.

Asuka had been practicing before the Millennium as well.

That’s exactly the reason why she could operate the giant Golem Robot.

\*

A week later.

There was a huge door before them.

Back then, this was the door that Irina was protecting. Now, there was a giant in front of it.

It wasn’t a Cyclops. Even more colossal, it was a giant whose whole body was clad in ice. An Ice Gigas.

However, even with the giant’s estimated level of 160, it was no match for Ria.

Ria killed it by herself.

Moreover, with a single attack.

Pulling her dark god sword from her shadow, she cleaved the giant in two from shoulder to waist.

Darkness magic. Not giving it any practical use in the least since being taught it by Valis, the current Ria was able to manipulate it freely.

“Man~, this really does cut well~”

Using Gallach for the first time, Ria said that.

Concerned that it might bring harm to her allies, she couldn’t make use of it lightly.

The Ice Gigas dispersed into dark particles and was sucked into the god sword.

It could absorb power and become stronger. This was definitely a godly weapon.

“Well then, let’s open it~”

Declaring that carefreely, Irina opened the door the the Dark Labyrinth’s deepest depths.

\*

Footnotes:

1. Note that Serge is starting to call himself with ‘ore (masculine)’ rather than his usual ‘oira (capricious/childish)’.

#### Author’s Note:

For your reference, here are the estimated levels of the six at this point.

220 Ria

210 Carla

170 Irina

160 Asuka

160 Serge

120 Chris

There are also things like racial skills and normal skills to take into account, so it doesn’t directly correlate with their strength and is for reference only.

# Chapter 99: Conversing With the Dark Dragon

There was a massive dragon inside.

Its existence alone could instill fear and awe into those who glimpsed it. The sacred, chaotic Dark Dragon Valis.

Even with its gargantuan scale, no one other than Chris' knees buckled.

"Tranquil Area."

Serge's magic blocked the pressure that was weighing down on Chris. With that, Chris slowly stood back up.

"Are you alright?"

"Yeah, sorry."

Chris was keenly aware of the fact that she was weak.

"Good job in coming back."

Even her voice contained a certain pressure. Without the assistance of his magic, even Serge's might've buckled as well.

"Valis-chan!"

Valis, seeing the familiar person that was the shouting Irina, once again shrunk her giant figure.

Just like the last time, her appearance was that of a human woman, very much like Ria.

"I take it you visited for something concerning the Millennium?"

"Dark Dragon Valis, I succeeded the title of Great Sage."

Serge stood ahead of the others, saying that.

However, Valis didn't respond. She'd likely already known just by looking at him.

"With that, I learned the meaning behind the Millennium. Even so, I don't truly understand what the meaning of the Great Collapse is."



Valid nodded, so he continued to talk.

“Please teach us the meaning of the Great Collapse.”

“It holds no meaning to humanity.”

Valis replied.

It was an answer that wasn't an answer.

Switching in for the speechless Serge, Ria stepped forward.

“The Millennium has started in the world above. Unlike the ones that've happen so far, demons and humans aren't fighting against each other, instead looking for ways to live together. Will that path lead to the Great Collapse?”

“Yes, the Great Collapse will occur soon enough.”

“Is this Great Collapse thing a planetary collapse?”

“It's different from that.”

Valis outright swept away Serge's reasoning.

“Then what is it? What will happen? That's what we want to know.”

“That is something that should not yet be known. If you want to ask someone, you should ask the Hero that became a Demon King.”

Valis stubbornly refused to answer her.

For some reason, she wouldn't tell them. But why?

Would something happen if she told them?

If so, what was that something?

That something might be what she'd told the Demon King.

“Can humanity survive the Great Collapse?”

Ria changed her question.

“I do not know. However, a few humans should be able to make it through. Just like how the elves, dwarfs, and demi-humans did in the past.”

So it was like that after all?

Ria made a prediction. Before, there used to be something called the Great Collapse.

And it was something like coming into contact with another world. Like how Heroes are summoned from other worlds.

Even humans were said to have come from another world. Assuming that to be true, what happened to their original world.

Did it not collapse, falling into ruin?

“Valis, I have one last thing I want to ask.”

Ria’s conjecture could easily be cleared up with this single answer.

“With your strength... could you destroy this planet?”

“... I could.”

Valis hesitated a few moments before responding.

\*

Ria’s conjecture solved, she would discuss with the rest about it later.

However, that ‘everyone’ didn’t include someone.

“This is the first time that those three have come here, is it not?”

Valis gazed towards Asuka, Chris, and Carla.

“Let’s grant a few blessings, then.”

At the moment, their mana all rose sharply.

“If you have a wish, tell me.”

“For me, more power.”

Asuka replied unhesitatingly.

Nodding, Valis rose Asuka’s mana to the limit. Unable to endure it, she collapsed on the spot.

“Oi, idiot. Pull yourself together.”

Watching Ria intervene, Chris responded.

“If you can, perpetual youth.”

Perpetual youth.

It was something that could even be called a curse.

That is, it was a blessing that would turn into a curse as you prayed for death.

“No, Chris! If you don’t want to grow old, just use magic!”

The one to stop her was Serge. However, Chris shook her head.

“You’ve resolved yourself to live forever, haven’t you?”

No, Serge only sought out strength.

The perpetual youth was only something that came along with it. When the time came, he would end it all by throwing himself into a volcano or something similar.

However, Chris voluntarily chose it for herself.

“Being able to live together for eternity would be better than being alone.”

This was also a curse to Serge.

Bathed by the light Valis sent forth, Chris chose a life of immortality.

“Stupid... perpetual youth isn’t something anyone should want...”

Serge knew of the expression that would sometimes appear on Azel’s face.

However, all that Chris knew was that it was the path that Serge chose.

Moreover, there was something that Serge didn’t know.

Leaving behind her birthplace, the only thing left for Chris was Serge.

Finally, the last one was Carla.

“I have only one desire.”

She looked towards Ria, thinking of something painful. Ria returned her gaze.

“I only wish to stay with her through all eternity.”

This was a much greater curse than even perpetual youth.

However, this was something the two wished.

“This will be fulfilled so long as my power allows.”

With that, Carla was bathed in Valis’ black light.

\*

“Now then, it’s my turn for a question.”

Finished with realizing their wishes, Valis spoke her wish.

“Ryuke Riana, are you resolved to become my successor?”

“Resolved... it’s not like I have any other choices, do I? Fortunately, I’m interested in going along with you.”

Shrugging her shoulders, Ria spoke her answer.

“In that case, you can leave. The next we meet, everything will come to an end.”

With that, Valis sent Ria and the others back to the surface.

Six people appeared at the entrance to the Dark Labyrinth.

One of them was a girl with flaxen hair, her head hanging.

“I’ll go. There’s no meaning in me being a hostage at this point.”

Conveniently, it was night time. It wasn’t impossible for her to fly.

“Yeah...”

With Ria’s terse response, Asuka took out her black wings and left towards the sky.

“That girl’s overworking herself.”

And so, five people remained.

“Now then, we should summarize everything.”

Ria spoke.

Everyone gave their views concerning the Millennium and the Great Collapse and put it all together.

They already knew everything about the Millennium. The Soul Cycle. It was to maintain the world.

Due to the Demon King's refusal to kill wantonly, the cycle would be disrupted.

As a result, the Great Collapse would occur. Things concerning the Great Collapse were still unclear.

However, with Valis' information and Serge's reasoning, they understood that it wasn't like the planet itself would be destroyed.

And according to Serge's memory, they knew that ten thousand humans were split up across the four continents.

Right now, this world had four continents.

The largest was the one they were on, the Dragon Bone Continent. The other three were: the Dragon Fang Continent, the Dragon Claw Continent, and the Dragon Wing Continent.

However, it was said that humans currently only resided on the Dragon Bone Continent.

Setting aside how the other three continents' human populace died out, it's said that around twelve hundred years ago, immigrants from the other continents settled in the southeastern part of the continent.

They were the present Seven City Union.

Both the reason and the cause was unknown, but mankind currently only resided on this continent in this world.

This continent's population was said to be somewhere around six hundred million, that and was just humans.

Supposing that only one person out of a hundred would survive, that meant that around six million people would survive.

Even so, only ten thousand people remained after the Great Collapse.

To think that only ten thousand people just barely survived their world coming into contact with this one...

Looking at how many people would normally die in a Millennium, it was six hundred times better than a Great Collapse.

It was a sobering fact.

Moreover, Valis said that she didn't know if they could survive the Great Collapse.

And she didn't deny the collapse of the world.

Possessing infinite connections to other worlds, then killing them off. Was that what the Great Collapse was?

"I have a headache..."

Ria truly was at wits end. She couldn't go with killing demons at this point.

Even setting aside Asuka's example, they were more human-like than the humans. She couldn't do something as ghastly as killing them at such a late point.

"I need to meet the Demon King."

She didn't know where the Demon King was. However, she needed the knowledge he possessed.

In the end, Ria came to a conclusion.

She would meet Demon King Ars.

# Chapter 100: The Demon Army's Swift Advance

After putting the Magic City under their umbrella, the demon army next set their sights on the Holy City.

Holy City Palan.

It was a city that even now still believed in the gods that had existed in this world, spreading their doctrine and instructing divine magic.

Of course, this was the only city that was incompatible to demons. An inescapable battle awaited there.

Practically all of the demon army's one million troops headed to capture the city.

People who converted from the Magic City to being part of the demon army were sent out to advise for capitulation just to make sure, but they were sent back with naught but their necks.

"It looks like humans turned into an even more barbaric race than ourselves at some point."

Muttering as such, Rei commenced the army's attack.

Palan's ramparts were unlike the Magic City's at a full twenty meters tall. Even their installations were improved.

Even their attacks with the giant races were prevented by magic defenses. Most of the first day saw only the demon army sustaining damage.

The problem occurred before the second day's sun rose.

The holy knights that commanded each of the units were assassinated en masse.

The culprits behind the acts were completely unknown. There were no eyewitnesses. However, despite it being so late at night, the temple's upper echelons were forced to decide on a new deployment.

And then the second problem occurred.

Another assassination happened, but this time it was on the priests in the temple's upper echelons.

The second day's battle occurred as those in the city viewed everyone else in suspicion.

The demon army's attack was much more calm compared to the first day's. It was as though they were feeling around for weak points.

Nevertheless, Palan received great damage.

This was due to the quickly chosen commanders being unable to give appropriate orders.

And so the dreaded second day's night fell.

Once again, several senior officials were assassinated. Moreover, ministers were among them this time.

In siege warfare, defeat was decided the moment their will broke.

In that sense, Palan hadn't lost until the afternoon of the third day.

Their defeat was decided on the morning of the fourth day.

A dagger was stabbed into the chest of a high priest that had been heavily guarded by strict security.

Needless to say, this was a message that said no matter who the target was, they could kill them at any time.

Thus, Palan's management chose to surrender.

The soldiers on the front line did not like that decision.

Even if they'd taken some damage, the walls were still fully intact. They'd lost a few commanders, sure, but they still had plenty of people.

However, they too lost the will to fight by the fifth day.

The holy knights that had been commanding them until just the day before greatly decreased in numbers.

All the way to the end, the specifics on the assassin(s) couldn't be



figured out.

Surely, no one would ever have thought that it was caused by a harmless peddler they'd become familiar with.

Palan was forced to relinquish their arms and the Magic City's troops that were dispatched here and fought together with Palan were allowed to return home.

The holy knights were obviously isolated. It was decided that their freedom would be deprived for a short while.

Like this, Palan, a city that boasted its holiness, fell into the demons' possession in just a short six days.

However, Rei did not attempt to put demons inside the city. She knew about the thing known as public sentiment.

As for what she did do, she destroyed their ramparts, as well as completely opening their gates.

They didn't touch the temples that were used to worship the many idols, however. Palins' residents would want to spend time there after losing the town's ramparts.

The demon army's advance did not stop there.

Leaving around half of their fighting strength—their inferior troops—there to stand by for security measures, the remaining elites were directed towards the center of the continent, the location that was once the empire.

Currently, Casalia and Lemdria's troops were marching to restore the lost public order.

This was to be the place that the demons would have their first decisive battle.

\*

Meanwhile, in the eastern part of the continent.

In a certain meaning, Ogress was enveloped in peace.

First off, the demons had never attempted to make a move against

Oomori Woods. This was due to a direct order they'd received beforehand by the Demon King.

They had a mutual noninterference with the elves, similar to the relationship the elves had with humans.

Istria didn't have the stamina left to fight against the demon army in the first place.

With their ten years of civil war finally coming to a close, the new king set the liberation of slavery as one of his policies.

As demi-humans were obviously included among those slaves, for Istria, cooperating with demons wasn't much of a hard decision.

Rather, the demon territory's farming methods quickly revived their devastated lands, but that was a story for another time.

The Istrian king formally recognized the emigration of demons onto his territory, forming a de facto alliance. In this aspect, they were similar to Ogress.

\*

The country in the southern part of the continent behaved as though it were someone else's problem at first.

However, they heard about the Magic City's capitulation and the Holy City's surrender and began to recall the legends of the previous Millennium.

They remembered that, other than the imperial capital and the eastern island, almost every human on the continent had perished.

In the southwest part of the continent, Labra existed only in name at this point. The great houses' heads that had protected it decided to give reinforcements to the humans' side. [1]

Due to their merchants' banks having a fallout, the southern Krasli was in such a miserable state that it couldn't even mobilize its army. The humans' side didn't know that this was caused by a plan carried out by the demon king over the course of years.

Despite their longtime war against Lemdria, The Seven City Alliance in the south-east decided to support them. Organizing their armies was difficult, but they mainly took charge of logistical support in the end.

Thus, the preparation for the decisive battle was completed. On the human side, Lemdria and Casalia's armies each reached 500,000, with 100,000 reinforcements from the south and 100,000 from the small to medium sized nations' armies, making a total of 1,200,000.

This was the largest army in mankind's history, an astronomically massive amount of troops.

The commander-in-chief was Lemdria's Prince, Ryuke Sion. Despite being a twenty-one year old youth, he had proved himself by conquering a castle that his deceased father, King Ryuke Hollyn, was unable to. [2]

However, his battle intuition told him that this army wouldn't move too skillfully.

So he set up a simple strategy: Lemdria's army would battle against their enemies from the front while Casalia and the other armies surround them.

The stage was the area that was once the northern part of the empire's territory.

The decisive battle would be carried out in a land named Falsas.

\*

Meanwhile, in Black Cat's headquarters that was in Lemdria's capital city, there was a meeting that had been held countless times occurring once again.

"We shall remain observers in this war."

Yamato—Saint Emperor Ryuke Shifaka—spoke. If this was the usual, it would have been the final say on the matter.

"Are you sure?"

Thor asked a question loaded with various meanings.

Shifaka nodded.

“If Ars brings the thing he used in that battle, the result would be the same. Rather, both armies would be damaged by stray hits.”

“Mou, did you give on up trying to avoid the Great Collapse?”

Even the normally taciturn Alvis interjected.

Twelve hundred years prior, he had led the surviving human race from the Dragon Wing Continent to this one. He was another Great Sage.

“I haven’t given up. However, there is nothing we can do in the current situation.”

Shifaka’s eyes looked as though he’d already given up on everything.

“If it was just a head on fight, I think the human side would win if I used explosion magic, but...”

Even the usually energetic Shana was low-spirited in this situation.

“It would be useless. Even if we defeated 500,000 demons, there would still be another 500,000 left. Besides...”

His fingers woven together, Shifaka stated a fact.

“Perhaps more than ten times the current demon army remained in the demons’ territory.”

This was true.

There were 1,000,000 demon troops. However, given the extreme fighting strength of the various demon races, most of them should be suitable for combat.

The humans’ defeat in this battle was decided the moment that they lost the Golden Dragon Clarice.

“What about Valis? She fought for the humans before.”

Azel already knew most of the reason why, but he couldn’t help but ask.

“Clarice has been lost. If we lose Valis as well, we will not make it through the Great Collapse. We can not have her make a move.”

His words were the words of the only human to have made it through a Great Collapse among them, any objections to it weren't permitted.

"So we couldn't decide on anything in the end?"

Thor sighed. However, Shifaka shook his head.

"I will go to meet Queen Ryuke Riana."

Shifaka usually wouldn't make any moves himself, so his statement was quite something.

"Azel, please accompany me. If possible, I would like to bring Dragonslayer Carla into our group."

Right, Shifaka hadn't given up.

Breast to breast with the Demon King, the Saint Emperor hadn't given up. He was the human farthest away from giving up in the world.

"And we'll talk with Kuoh as well. I don't believe that Oomori Woods alone will make it through this situation safely, after all."

His comrades could see a certain sparkle dwelling within his aged eyes.

\*

Footnotes:

1. Labra has been mentioned a few times throughout the story, being less and less powerful each time it's mentioned.
2. Another person mentioned a while back in one of the Black Cat PoV chapters.

# Chapter 101: The Battle at Falsas

There was a wilderness with the name of Falsas.

It was a rich plain at one point. A narrow river flowed through it, supplying the imperial capital's food. It was a massive grain-producing region.

Now, however, it was nothing but a wilderness. Through a certain rampant magic, the imperial capital and everything else disappeared.

An army made its appearance in an area just right to deploy its forces in.

The demon army came from the north, occupying a hillock and being vigilant of the enemies that were coming from the other three directions.

Allied forces approached from those three directions. They set up camp a sufficient distance away.

In terms of replenishing their supplies, the demon army was at a disadvantage. This was the human race's territory, after all. Even though they'd occupied everything behind them, even ignoring the giant races among them, they were still a 500,000 strong host. Them fighting a war of attrition was unthinkable.

Meanwhile, although it was due to psychological reasons, the allied forces had to make this a short-term decisive battle as well.

What are demons? For humanity, they were pure evil. For the humans, it was impossible to allow them to stay in mankind's territory forever.

However, not giving into his generals' opinions, the commander-in-chief, Sion, insisted that they should make this battle an extended one.

Although they had no less than double their enemy's troop count, he didn't think that that was enough to win.

The demon army was composed of many strong races like goblins, orcs, kobolds, and beastkin. They weren't lacking in races well-versed in magic like dark elves, vampires, nagas, and three-eyes, either.

They also had races whose bodies were overwhelming, like giants and

trolls. He believed that as far as war potential was concerned, they lost.

The demon army dispatched a dark elf envoy to this awfully composed commander. The message was that if they were given these devastated lands, they wouldn't advance any further for the time being.

The allied forces rejected the offer, of course. They hadn't hurt the envoy, either. This was due to Sion recognizing the demons as an equal opponent, however.

In a certain sense, that was the beginning of a mutual understanding.

Their face-off reached the tenth day.

The demon army's state was visible to the allied forces to some extent. What was especially noticeable were their giant golems, the most characteristic of which being a single, massive blue golem.

Whereas the golems so far looked as though they were wearing knight armor, this golem was more animalistic. It looked like the silhouette that forsook everything to run.

Let alone the humans, even only a few people on the demons' side knew that this was the final weapon made by the Demon King. In other words, it was the robot that united chemistry and magic. Its name was the Demon King's Machine God.

Even setting aside the various races and equipment, this robot's existence stalled the allied forces' movement.

\*

And then the eleventh day arrived.

The first thing to move was a unit from the demon army.

Unable to endure their impulses to fight that were even stronger than a human's, it was a force of trolls that decided to attack of their own volition.

She clicked her tongue, but Rei gave the entire army an order to attack.

"Move freely! If you're still alive when this is over, I'll lash you with my

whip!”

They didn’t say it, but the staff felt that that would’ve actually been a reward.

After having a back and forth with magic, the fighting started.

The humans’ magic were primarily targeting the giants that were wrecking their formations.

As for the demons’ magic, it was focused on something much more annoying: Casalia’s dragoons.

By throwing down explosives down on demon troops from the sky, the demon army’s formations were collapsing badly.

“Be ready for attacks from above! That stuff isn’t magic!”

Still issuing orders, Rei looked over the battle’s progress. The demon army far outstripped the allied forces in ability to charge. However, once they clashed, they were surrounded and destroyed.

The same happened to their strong individuals standing alone, their numbers decreasing.

The demon army held a stronger war potential.

However, even including their elevation advantage, against the allied forces’ experience, their numbers were decreased little by little.

They numbered 500,000 and 1,200,000 before the confrontation, so any smaller tactics now would be meaningless.

Rei decided to call for a retreat when the allied forces’ reserves started to move so as to cut off the demon army’s path to retreat.

“Sound the retreat gong! I’ll be heading out with the Machine God!”

The demon army’s retreat began.

This was a retreat, but it wasn’t that they’d lost. Although their forces on the outer edges were hit by attacks and were routed, the interior troops held their discipline and kept moving.

Moreover, a giant blue golem stood as the army’s rear guard.



Wielding a giant halberd, the golem swept away an entire human unit in one blow.

“Notify your troops, pursuit is meaningless.”

Sion judged that if they were to keep pursuing, they would instead be the ones to suffer a loss.

Indeed, the demon army had still maintained control over themselves, aiming for that.

(Our advance has finally stopped, huh? The humans' as well.)

Rei muttered to herself, but she felt that everything was proceeding nicely.

However, in truth, the allied forces were dissatisfied.

It was common knowledge that the best results could be obtained while pursuing a retreating foe.

And Sion had stopped them from doing just that.

The second battle to occur between the demons and the allies would not have Sion in command of it.

The demon army retreated to the outskirts of the empire's territory.

There, Rei received Demon King Ars' arrival.

His figure suddenly appeared midair on the robot's shoulder. The feeling of that happening was transmitted to Rei, who was inside of the robot.

The robot's movements were connected to Rei. Rei, still having the robot walk, went outside of it.

“Your Majesty!?”

For many demons, this was the first time they'd seen their Demon King.

Even though they'd heard that their Demon King was a human, the only people they'd seen for hundreds of years were his aides.

“Good work. It must've been hard.”

“I am sorry. For this to happen while Your Majesty's army was under my

supervision...”

Rei knelt on the robot’s hand.

“War is something of chance. Our enemies’ numbers are great, it couldn’t be helped.”

Then, the Demon King stopped their advance and started giving a speech.

It was a calm, composed explanation for their defeat. It wasn’t something meant to raise their morale.

However, he added something at the end.

“I will be there for the next battle.”

There was nothing in existence that could raise the Demon King’s army’s morale more than that.

With that, the Demon King summoned new robots in front of the army.

They were robots that looked the same as Rei’s... and there were ten of them.

One of the robots were black with the rest of them being white.

Each time one of the robots appeared, the Demon King’s troops’ morale increased even further.

\*

Three days later, a rematch between the Demon King’s army and the allied forces was held on the plains of Falsas.

This second battle came to be known as [The Battle at Falsas].

And in this second battle, the Demon King’s army came out with a landslide victory.

The humans couldn’t stop the Demon King’s Machine Gods in the least.

They were simply overrun through an absurdly overwhelming difference in power.

Perhaps, if Sion were there, they might have been able to find some way

to break away while using walls of flesh for time.

However, he'd already left the encampment and headed back after having a falling out with his staff officers.

Their army of 1,200,000 troops scrambled to run away.

It wasn't as though there weren't those who would eventually make a name for themselves among those caught in the confusion.

But they were nothing but defeated soldiers for now.

The Demon King's army let out their war cries.

They'd triumphed. The now possessed the norther part of the empire.

However, there were still upwards of a million troops remaining for the allied forces, so it wasn't like they couldn't launch a counterattack.

But their remaining staff officers were lacking in ability.

Regretting that they dismissed Sion out of misguided rage, they returned to their countries.

\*

"Now, let's make a country!"

Following the Demon King's declaration, a nation started to be built.

Canals were built, soil was plowed, walls were made, and a city was erected.

It took a mere few days for it to be completed through the help of 500,000 people.

This was the birth of a city that would come to be known as Falsas in times to come.

# Chapter 102: A Night at Manesh

Having returned to Manesh after the course of events at Jaeburg, they decided to rest right away.

By the time Serge woke up, it was evening.

In the bed prepared for him in the royal place, he thought about various things.

But they weren't about the Millennium, nor were they about the Great Collapse. They were all about Chris' choice.

"It's not like that, Chris..."

Although perpetual youth wasn't true immortality, it was considerably close to it.

Living for hundreds, thousands of years, why would she choose that?

Serge thought that it was because she herself lacked power.

That she gained perpetual youth to acquire strength, the same as him.

He was misunderstanding her.

Around that time, there was a knock at the door.

"Serge, are you up?"

It was Chris' voice.

"O-one sec!"

Tidying up his bedhead, Serge opened the door.

Chris stood there wearing a tunic over thin silk.

"Dressed like that... for now, just come in."

Chris entered, he closed the door behind her.

Just as he was about to turn back around to inside of his room, he felt something soft.

It was Chris' body. Her breasts, warmth and scent all assaulted Serge.

“Chris...”

“Serge, please... make me your wife.”

The girl spoke in with a passionate voice.

“I understand.”

Turning towards Chris, Serge placed his hands on her shoulders.

“Be it a millennia or even longer... will you stay by my side?”

“If it’s you, yes.”

Tilting her head so that her glasses wouldn’t get in the way, she leaned her head forward.

The two kissed... clumsily.

\*

That day, Ria slept with Carla.

They didn’t do anything, they had only slept.

Therefore, when one of them noticed, the other had noticed as well.

“It looks like someone’s here.”

“Who is it?”

The Manesh royal palace’s barrier was created by Carla and Guinevere using magic essence, so it wasn’t something that one could simply enter. Moreover, for them to practically not even leave any traces...

“The Demon King...?”

“That would be good.”

Quickly changing their clothes, the two made their way out to the courtyard covered in the moonlight.

There was an expressionless man who didn’t have many discerning features there.

He wore ordinary leather armor. The only thing that stood out was an elegant long sword that hung at his waist.

“Who are you?”

Ria asked, taking Nagasone Kotetsu into her hand. The man extended his arms, showing he meant no harm.

“Would you know who I am if I said Black Cat’s Company Director, Yamato?”

It was an immediately recognizable name for a reincarnator. This included Ria, of course.

She wanted to hear his true name.

“May I hear your real name as well?”

“Let’s talk first. I’ll tell you if you seem trustworthy.”

They were in the courtyard of the royal palace and he was talking to the queen. Despite him being the trespasser, his attitude was as though he hadn’t done anything wrong.

Ria liked cheeky people like that.

“Good then. But do you mind if we get some more people?”

“I don’t mind, but you should limit it to only those you trust.”

“Of course. Alright, let’s move to a better spot.”

Ria herself guided Yamato to the arbor, asking Carla to round everyone else up.

As an aside, this put a stop to Serge and Chris’s passions.

\*

As for who all had gathered in the arbor, first there was Yamato. As well as Carla and Ria who had been there from the start.

Guinevere, Serge, and Chris joined them.

Among them, Guinevere had also realized that a person invaded the barrier she herself created, so she knew that he was no ordinary person.

And Serge simply knew him.

This man’s face was deep within the Great Sage’s memories.

“Saint Emperor... Ryuke Shifaka...”

He was a human from three millennia before. Among those he'd met thus far, this man was the longest living person he'd met save for the God Dragon, Valis.

As everyone was surprised by Serge's words, the man smiled wryly. His smile looked as though it were forced.

“So there's a Great Sage successor here? Indeed, I am Shifaka.”

“What is your business?”

Even facing her ancestor, Ria's attitude didn't change.

“I'll get straight to the point. I would like you to cooperate in the fight against the demons.”

“To prevent the Great Collapse?”

“If you know that much, why are you not fighting?”

The others watching the proceedings uneasily, Ria spoke confidently.

“Because I don't want to.”

“Don't want to?”

Shifaka's expression didn't change even with her frank statement.

“I... we, are too connected to the demons. And now that we know they aren't evil, we can't just murder them.”

“Even with what happens in the Great Collapse?”

“Yeah. What exactly is this Great Collapse thing anyway? There's only bits and pieces about it even in Serge's memories. Valis kept her mouth closed about it as well. Just what is the Great Collapse?”

“I see, so you heard about it from Valis...”

Shifaka looked like he was thinking. As for what he responded with, it wasn't something that met Ria's satisfaction.

“If that's how she responded to you, I shouldn't answer either. However, I'll ask once more. Will you not be fighting against demons in this

Millennium?”

“So persistent. Besides, I don’t intend to show good faith to someone who won’t tell me anything.”

“In that case, there’s no reason for me to stay here...”

Shifaka stood up, causing Ria to grip Nagasone Kotetsu in her hand.

“Don’t misunderstand me. Now that the Great Collapse is unavoidable, there is no meaning in depleting this world’s fighting strength.”

Even so, Ria did not take her hand off of the katana. She realized just how dangerous this man before her was and wouldn’t risk it.

Despite that, Shifaka took it as natural and walked out of the arbor.

“We will fight together in the Great Collapse. Once that time comes, I’ll be relying on you.”

“I still have a lot of things I want to ask, but feel free.”

With that, Shifaka took to the skies.

\*

“We didn’t learn anything in the end, did we?”

Ria muttered. Carla told Guinevere what had happened with Valis.

“If we met Gonbei-sama, we might understand something...” [1]

For Guinevere, the Demon King was still Gonbei.

At that moment, a court lady came into the arbor.

She had been told not to come unless there were an emergency, so it was obviously urgent.

It turned out to be news of Magic City’s surrender.

“N-no...”

Chris weakly fell back in her chair. A preliminary report had already arrived, but the details were still unknown.

However, there was information that the Earl, her father, had survived.



“My brother? Do you know what happened to my brother?”

Unfortunately, the information they had was limited. Once again, Chris sat limp on the char.

“Nee-chan, I’ll take her...”

Leaning against and entrusting her weight to Serge, Chris left.

“They can coexist with us, but it seems something didn’t go so well there.”

Feeling a wave of exhaustion, Guinevere leaned back against the backrest.

“It’s easier to rule after defeating them first, after all.”

Just after Ria finished saying that, another report came in. It was a preliminary report through magic.

The first battle at Falsas was the allied forces’ victory.

“Isn’t that... bad?”

Carla was worried that this might spur humans into being even more aggressive against the demons.

“We’ll head back to Jaeburg. Can we leave the rest to you?”

Ria and Carla stood up. Guinevere nodded.

“But you should at least look at your children’s faces.”

Ria and Carla shared a look with each other.

These two were barely present as parents.

\*

Footnotes:

1. Just to note, the last—and only—time this name has ever been used was way back in Chapter 57.

# Chapter 103: A Happy Occasion and an Unlucky Affair

“I did it...”

What Serge saw when he opened his eyes on the bed was Chris’ sleeping face.

Her still-innocent face was lovely, so he spent some time staring at it. However...

Picking up his clothes that had been tossed aside onto the floor, he put them on quietly so as to not make any noise.

But he failed.

“Serge...?”

Glasses were magical things to the last. Sitting up, Chris covered her chest and looked in Serge’s direction. [1]

“Is your body alright?”

“Yeah, I’m alright now. Ah, but...”

Noticing the stain on the bed, Chris blushed, so Serge cleaned it up in a way that only a mage could.

“I’ll be heading back to my room for a few minutes, let’s talk in the dining hall.”

“Yeah, Serge...”

Still blushing and hiding her chest, Chris spoke.

“Last night... made me happy.”

She just got more and more cute!

“Oh come on, she’s just too cute, gaaah!”

Back in his room, Serge was writhing on his bed.

Yesterday was his first time, so he did it normally. But what about the next time?

(I wonder if I could do that? That'd probably be a bit bad, yeah, it's impossible physically. Doing that might get her angry...) Thinking over his memories of the previous night caused a reaction, so he wasn't able to leave for a while.

Eventually heading out to the dining room, he saw Chris, who'd put herself in order.

And for some reason, Guinevere was with her.

She would've normally been in her office at this hour, but she was looking through documents there for some reason.

And Chris' face was bright red.

"I hear you two enjoyed yourselves last night?"

"Gofu—"

Serge received 34 Points of damage.

And so it was decided that the two would receive Guinevere's assistance.

\*

Having returned to Jaeburg, Ria and Carla were visiting the demon town during the day.

There were many races like goblins and orcs, but there were also races like dark elves and people with a snake tail for a lower half. There were a lot of humans, too.

At first, the demons were bewildered when the two flew down from the sky, but began to act as though nothing had happened soon after.

This was a town. It felt a bit rural, but to the two of them, it felt even cleaner than human cities.

Then they stopped and asked a passing demon, they found out that the government-ish building was the place Asuka lived.

As a vampire, she was obviously asleep at the time, so they decided to meet her after sun fall.

And so the two accompanied each other as they strolled through the

demon town.

“Impressive.”

That was their impression.

First off, it felt like it was a countryside that was still under development. There were quite a number of buildings in the government and shopping districts a bit away from the government office that were bigger than those in Manesh.

Rather, it was to the point that if this were a human city rather than a demon one, wouldn't it cause Jaeburg to fall into decline?

Most of all, the various races were all on good relations.

There were differences in body size and what their lower halves were of course, but their living habitats had been divided up properly. Compared to that, human towns were unified with just one race in mind as the norm, so everyone getting along in them would've been difficult.

“It'll be evening soon. Guess it's time to head there?”

Carla agreed, so after the two finished eating a light meal, they headed to the government building.

Same as the one in Manesh, it was made out of brick.

Asuka appeared in front of the two shortly after they entered.

Unusual for her, she looked rather exhausted.

“Welcome to our temporary office.”

“This is temporary? It's plenty imposing already though.”

Carla truly admired it, but for demons, even this wasn't enough to be considered satisfactory.

The two were guided to a place that looked like a terrace. They could see the town's citizens moving about in the evening from where they stood.

“There are lots of nocturnal races among demons after all. Our Nul Jaeburg is a city that never sleeps.”

“So, what do you want to talk about?”

Drinking blood she'd poured into a wine glass, Asuka asked them a question.

“I want to see the Demon King.”

“Impossible. Even we don't know where he is.”

Incidentally, it felt like Ria had been told that before.

“But it feels like he's close by. I have that sort of feeling.”

The Demon King had actually returned to the demon territory to maintain his robots after using them in that tussle in Falsas though.

“The Black Cats' leader came to pay us a visit.”

“Geh, he didn't say anything weird right? Those people and His Majesty are like cats and dogs.”

It wasn't actually that bad, but she couldn't help but say it.

Carla explained everything that had happened.

Asuka sighed.

They hadn't found out anything new in the end. Even when they told her about the humans' victory at Falsas, she didn't look like it was much of a shock to her. Perhaps she already knew? There was a possibility that the humans would become more bullish from winning the Battle at Falsas, so when she informed the residents of the city to not leave for a while, they easily accepted the order.

Although they didn't learn anything new from their trip, they did get a big harvest in that they were able to see the city with their own eyes.

It made them all the more certain that demons and humans shouldn't fight one another.

\*

The two returned to Manesh once again after paying a quick visit to Vargas in Jaeburg.

They were told about a rather happy occasion by Serge.

He would be marrying Chris.

Although it could like they were currently in an emergency, it was exactly because of that emergency that it would happen.

In fact, the number of marriage applications skyrocketed after the Millennium began.

People didn't know when they might die, so they didn't want to ignore the ones they loved.

"I see~, mmhmm, I see~"

After nodding like she was just wanting to nod for the sake of it, Ria started asking questions with a big smile on her face.

How did he propose? When and where did it happen? Would it turn into a public event?—Those kinds of questions.

Contrasting the ever-blushing Chris, Serge responded with a sulky expression.

"You know, I hate to bring it up right now, but..."

As Guinevere was there as well, she brought something up.

"Chris' father is still alive, so we have to get permission from him too."

For this world's nobility, the family's patriarch had to approve of the marriage. It'd be called eloping if they didn't get it.

"Umm, actually, Otou-sama told me to give myself to Serge..."

What a formidable man, that Earl.

"You have the queen's approval though, isn't that alright? Queen-sama."

"Don't wanna don't wanna! I wanna invoke the Lord's Right!" [2]

Ria was throwing a tantrum about something that no one in this world would understand in the least.

"What in the world are you dissatisfied about?"

Shocked, Carla spoke up. Accordingly, Ria stopped waving her arms

about.

“I hate humans that get to be happy when I’m so busy.”

“Is that something a person with three wives can say?”

“But that girl’s so cute!”

With that, Chris looked surprised.

“How about it, Chris? When Serge cheats on you, come on over to me. We’re both girls, it wouldn’t be cheating.”

When. Like it was a certainty or something.

“N-no, that’s... well, it’s normal for aristocrats to have several concubines... I think?”

“Eh!? I can!?”

Everyone immediately gave Serge a cold glare.

During the time they’d originally scheduled Serge’s peerage ceremony, this time, they were told of the allied forces’ defeat at Falsas.

And that as a result, the allied troops would disperse, returning to their respective countries.

And that the northern part of the empire had become demon territory.

And that with this, the northern part of the empire would be revived from its ruin. That in itself was a good thing, but it frightened humans that demons would flourish and prosper.

“We have to be the mediators between demons and humans.”

Carla muttered indifferently.

However, the ditch separating humans and demons would not be so easily filled. It surely wouldn’t be filled through war.

In the winter of the Continental Year 3003, reserve troops came from the demon territory along with noncombatants.

A minor collision occurred even in the vicinity of Jaeburg.

It was about hunting.

There were many races among the demons whose staple food was meat, so they required as much prey as possible. They'd collided with human hunting areas.

Any major disputes that could've happened from that were avoided by the demons backing down, but due to them going with that attitude, the humans started to think something humans never would have thought.

That is, they thought that demons weren't that scary.

That the nearby monsters were more of a threat than demons. This thought started to spread.

But finally, a certain day arrived.

A group of human hunters killed a small group of kobolds.

The cause of it was them scrambling for the same prey, but it could also be said that it was their arrogance as humans desiring too much.

Ria couldn't leave this problem to be handled by Jaeburg's self-governing body. She had to lay down the punishment personally.

\*

Footnotes:

1. Fairly certain this is just saying that her putting on glasses turned him on again.
2. First Night Rights(JP-raw term) = Droit du Seigneur(FR-origin term) = Lord's Right(EN). The 'right' that a feudal lord may lay with a bride even before the groom on the night of their marriage.



# Chapter 104: An Exchange

Ria was very troubled.

She was troubled about the murder between humans and demons started by that hunt.

Their future relations with demons might just depend on how this case was handled.

If it had been humans they'd killed, they would have received capital punishment or been demoted to a crime slave.

However, the ones killed this time were demons, kobolds. There naturally hadn't be anything like a penalty for killing kobolds before.

While that may be true, they couldn't be declared innocent. If they were, relations between their races would deteriorate.

"So, what's to be done?"

Asuka had come all the way over to Jaeburg's government office.

"By the way, what happens for stuff like this in the Demonlands?"

Asuka silently gestured her thumb across her neck. A much more severe punishment than Jaeburg gave.

"Could it be solved with compensation?"

"I don't care... but could they pay?"

"It'll be paid for from the national treasury this time. How about one hundred and sixty gold for the four fallen kobolds?"

This was an unreasonable compensation for human nations.

Nevertheless, Asuka nodded composedly.

"What would happen to the offenders?"

That was the main topic. Asuka hadn't figured out her stance on what was to be done about that either.

"They'd normally be sent to do slave labor to pay off a suitable fine, but

for this, they'll be executed.”

Asuka's eyebrows twitched.

“That is, their crime is not that they murdered kobolds. It's national treason. By deteriorating our relations with the demons, they were attempting to shake the security of all nations with their actions.”

That was the solution Guinevere had proposed.

The ultimate solution was for neither side to feel hostile towards the other.

Although this would obviously lower Ria's popularity, it shouldn't be something fatal to her reputation. Guinevere felt that way.

However, Ria was thinking a step further than that.

“... That's how we'll have it look like at least.”

She then said something that astonished Asuka.

“We'll be sending the criminals to the Demonlands.”

“... Are you serious?”

“If you have a village with strong demons, I'd prefer to send them there. Then if they can reform after a few years, we can have them decide if they want to stay or return.”

“ ... ”

Asuka changed through several different expressions with her arms crossed as she looked up at the ceiling, to the left, and to the right. She even looked behind her.

“That's interesting. Maybe I'll find a town with lots of vampires living in it?”

Showing off her sharp fangs, she passed her judgment on them.

Later on, that group quickly adapted to the demon town, even staying there with other family members. That was, however, a story for another time.

“By the way, what’s going on with me meeting the Demon King?”

“I was in touch with Rei. His Majesty will head here when he is free.

“... That guy seems super busy all the time for some reason though?”

“... Please don’t say it like that.”

“In that case, how about I go to him? He’s probably in Casalia or Lemdria yeah? Or maybe the Empire’s territory?”

“The Empire’s territory. He should be in a place called Falsas overseeing the town’s construction.”

In a panic, Asuka hurriedly stopped Ria as she started to get up immediately after saying that.

“There’s the chance you’ll miss each other, so please wait here.”

\*

The day eventually came.

In much too much of a grandiose manner—enough to rival Shifaka’s manner—a masked man stood in the Manesh palace’s courtyard after breaking its barrier.

Standing amidst the assembling guards with an attendant, his gaze swept across the area and shouted.

“SoXXmon! I’m back!” [1]

In a reception room, four people stared off against the Demon King and his attendant.

The Demon King took his hands out from his pocket and spoke.

“Ah, it’s not much, but here.”

What he had in his hands... were Demon King steamed buns. [2]

...

Time stopped.

The first person to break the silence was Serge with a laugh, eliciting the Demon King to roar in laughter as well.

Ria smiled wryly before joining in as well. As for Carla and Guinevere, they didn't understand the significance of it.

Because it had something written in Japanese.

It said [Artful Treat: Demon King Steamed Buns]. Moreover, written in pointlessly perfect penmanship.

"So you still don't intend on taking off that mask?"

Ignoring the three's continual laughter, Guinevere asked him a question in an ice cold voice.

"Do I need to take it off?"

"We can't talk as equals with someone who isn't going to show us their face."

Saying that after finally getting out of her laughing fit, Ria caused the Demon King to sigh.

"You already know though, right?"

"I'd like to see your face to be certain."

On this point, Guinevere was obstinate.

The man she had once loved. The man that was her own son's father.

"I know, but don't say anymore. It's more fun when you expose your own identity unexpectedly."

The Demon King then quickly took off his mask.

"It's not him..."

Guinevere muttered. His identity wasn't the mysterious mage, Gonbei.

"But honestly, this face is just another fake one."

Like a certain mysterious thief's grandson, the skin on his face peeled away. Even his voice changed. [3]

"Still not him..."

This face was one of a youthful man, different from the one Guinevere knew.

“Now when I wear this, the mysterious mage will be completed.”

When he took out a new mask and put it on, another face with a sharp look in its eyes appeared.

“Gonbei-sama!”

The Demon King’s attendant stopped Guinevere as she tried to hug him from over the table.

She was also wearing a mask, but still hadn’t removed it.

“What an unromantic way for long-separated lovers to meet.”

“Lovers? It looked more like one-sided love on your end to me.”

The attendant—a flight magic user that could keep up with the Demon King on the way here—had a second-rate disguise. Having met her before, Ria knew who she was.

“You’re from Black Cats?”

“I was figured out?”

Taking off her mask after being asked that by Ria, the one to appear was Ferna.

“I was formerly part of Black Cat’s management. I am now Halt-san’s right hand.”

“Haruto? Is that your real name?”

Ria asked. It was also a Japanese name.

Taking off the mask, the Demon King returned to looking like a Japanese youth.

“I’m Arisugawa Haruto. I’m called Ars Gahalt here though.” [4]

It was the name of the Hero from the legends.

It was said that, in the end, he and the Demon King had killed each other in a one-on-one fight. A legendary existence.

“By the way, you got any tea?”

And this legendary existence took things pretty easily.

They were talking about secret things, so Carla brewed the tea herself.

“Aah~, smells great~”

His dignity as the Demon King couldn't be seen in his tea ceremony skills at all.

“Now then, Demon King... no, should I call you Halt-san?”

“Yeah, that way.”

“Then Halt-san, I'll ask you frankly. What the heck happens in the Great Collapse? Neither the Saint Emperor nor the Dark Dragon would answer. But you know right?”

Halt crossed his arms with a pensive look.

[Let's see, who of you have a previous life?]

Hearing the question spoken in Japanese, Ria and Serge raised their hands.

[I'll say it then. You can explain it to the others later. But do you really want to hear it? You won't regret it?]

Both Ria and Serge nodded vigorously. They were practically impatient, there was no way they'd pass up hearing it.

Sighing, Halt finally told them.

[It's when the dimensional boundary breaks and two worlds collide.]

He had spoken entirely in Japanese.

“That is the Great Collapse.”

Returning to this world's language, Halt said as such.

\*

Footnotes:

1. This is referring to Gato's speech from Gundam 0083. Here's the relevant video.

2. You give steamed buns as a gift after a long time away (90s anime trope).
3. Lupin the III reference.
4. In the past, I was translating his name as 'Halt' because I thought it was meant to be a pseudonym to fit in with this world's style. Turns out it's not (according to a few lines up).

# Chapter 105: Countermeasures

[Two worlds, you mean—]

Ria stopped Serge there.

[Wait, Serge. I don't get what he's meaning by dimensional boundary.]

[Ah, it's like SciFi stories. It's the boundary that separates worlds... right?]

Even Serge only really understood it as a feeling.

[Pretty much.]

In poor manners, Haruto spilled a few drops of tea onto the table.

[In what Valis said, there is a massive, thick root (origin) for all worlds. Or perhaps it would be better to call it a trunk?]

He drew a thick line.

[Thin branches grow out of it. Many, many of them. They eventually collide with each other. And then one—or even both—will collapse. That is the great collapse.]

Twisted and tangled lines came out from the single line.

[The power of the Soul Cycle is used so that we don't collide, changing the path of our branch. This is the purpose of the Millennium... it's probably right to think of it like that, at least.]

Then, Haruto said something even more impactful.

[By the way, the Millennium isn't something that happens once every thousand years. Every time a crisis occurred, wars between humans and demons took place on the other continents as well. As a result of that, there are virtually no humans nor demons on the other continents right now.]

[Then that means...]

[Yeah, the next Millennium will happen in less than a thousand years. You know about the survivors coming here from another continent twelve



hundred years ago right? They're the survivors of what were used for the Soul Cycle.]

Without the Soul Cycle, the world would have perished.

[How did we survive the Great Collapse from 3000 years ago? Ten thousand humans came over from that world, but...]

[The past Fire God Dragon exchanged her life to destroy that world. Until then, this world was making it through the Millennium through conflicts between demons.]

Amazing, God Dragon-sama.

Huh? But that means...

[The one to prevent the next Great Collapse... is going to be Valis?]

Ria quickly realized it.

[Yeah. She will destroy the other world using her power, letting that world's residents move over to this world's other continents at the same time. That should allow us to get through Millenniums for a while.]

"That's all I have to say."

And, like this, Haruto was finished with his story.

\*

While Serge summed it up to the three people that didn't understand Japanese, Ria was lost in thought.

And so she thought—wasn't that beyond arrogant? The arrogance needed to destroy a world.

In response to Ria's thought, Haruto only responded by telling her to figure out an alternate route.

An alternate route wasn't something that could be so easily figured out. Even Haruto had been trying to think one up for a millennia.

It was the same for many others.

The three continents' permissible population was estimated to be below

a sum total of 600,000,000. That was almost the same amount of humans on the Dragon Bone Continent.

What kind of world would they brush against in this next Great Collapse? There might only be creatures living there that wouldn't be able to cope with this world. Or there might not be any intelligent life.

But what Haruto said was the problem was completely different from those.

Namely, the humans of the other world were far stronger than those of this one's.

"But the Dragons are here for that right?"

The sight she saw in Valis' dwelling. However many strong humans there were, compared to a single dragon, they were but ants.

But.

There was a but.

Those assembled right there were people that surpassed even those Dragons.

For enemies that could not be handled by Dragons, humans had produced living weapons.

—Oh. There's already no way to go but to cooperate at this point, is there?

Ria held out her hand—Haruto gripped it.

\*

"By the way, why did the demons head south for the Millennium?"

Now that she'd heard his story this far, she felt that they didn't have to fight against humans in this Millennium.

Haruto smiled wryly at her question.

"Well, it's mainly because of population. The Demonlands couldn't feed any more demons. Our population control policies aren't working out too well."

It was a simple reason.

“Also, when I first wanted to spread the Demonlands’ technological developments to humanity, I had a thought. Couldn’t humans and demons live together?”

“Demons’ technology has developed that much?”

“To the point that we can build robots. Want to see?”

Serge, who was shown one in the courtyard, was very excited.

“You have enough mana to ride it, I don’t mind giving you one as a present.”

It was just a verbal promise, but it was decided that Serge would be given a Machine God. Demon King-sama was generous.

And finally, their talks lead to this war’s compromise.

The demons didn’t particularly want to rule the humans. They simply wanted to have land to live on.

And even if it overlapped with human areas, there wasn’t any problem with.

Some humans had no problems with allowing the existence of demon-kind. Although there were many acts of brutality unleashed upon them by feral demons in the Millennium one thousand years prior, it was something that couldn’t be helped as they were at war.

“Come to think of it, those humans that got sent to the Demonlands seem to be adapting well.”

Haruto spoke about them as well.

“The demons won, didn’t overstep their demands, and just want land...?”

Listening to the opinions of her civil officials—that is, Guinevere and Fio—Ria thought.

“We want to scout out people that have the makings of being able to be our pilots.”

Ferna spoke up.

“What about me and Carla?”

“Isn’t it better for you two to fight as you are?”

Although it was actually just that Haruto didn’t want to add uncontrollable elements to his war potential, the two agreed with her statement.

Regarding Casalia, they’d probably be able to work something out through Ria’s influence. The problem was the other countries.

The biggest problem was Lemdria. It had a large swath of land, strong soldiers, and enormous political might. It could probably even be called the strongest country on the continent. It was a country that exceeded even Ogress and Casalia.

“If you defeated them, wouldn’t the other countries naturally back off?”

Although Ria felt that would happen, Guinevere thought about it more politically.

“It’s not as though they would surrender to demons so simply. The people wouldn’t stand for it.”

Really?—Ria, the queen of Ogress, was baffled by that. Ogress had both beastkin and ogres, the source of the country’s name, so their resistance was much less.

Ria might be able to somehow deal with the controversy Casalia’s citizens have towards demons through her royal bloodline, but what about Lemdria?

It had both a capable royal line and a powerful army. And quite a population. It definitely wouldn’t yield so easily.

“Come to think of it, how much can we delay the Great Collapse?”

Ria and the others had entirely forgotten to ask about that.

“The delay will be longer the more people die, so...”

The Soul Cycle certainly was something that couldn’t be relied on, even given what it did.

“The demons will triumph over humanity with their overwhelming strength, then only wish to unite through peace?”

“That’s right. And playing the role of mediator will be Ogress.”

Haruto gave his conclusion, everyone else agreeing with him.

“By the way...”

A rather ferocious smile crept onto Ria’s face as she looked at Halt.

“How about we have a fight?”

“No way. What would happen if something went wrong?”

“We have a revival magic user right here.”

Ria motioned towards Carla. But Halt just shook his head.

“Revival magic stopped working once the Millennium began.”

Even Valis wouldn’t be able to resurrect the dead once the Soul Cycle ramped itself up.

Although something could be done if they were dealt with just before they died, if they did die, it wouldn’t work even if they attempted to revive the person immediately.

“So you all should be careful, alright?”

Haruto spoke with a carefree tone.

\*

“Now then, guess it’s time for us to head back?”

That much was obvious since their discussions had come to a close, but Guinevere was trying to stop him from leaving somehow.

Because of that, she ended up getting into a cat fight with Ferna, but that’s a digression.

# Chapter 106: The Lemdria Campaign

The battle between Lemdria and the demon army had advanced as expected.

Before the demons' overwhelming strength, Lemdria's army suffered defeats one after another.

But even that was one of Prince Sion's strategies.

Having rather extended supply lines, the demon army was troubled for food. Although they'd wanted to procure food locally, the humans wouldn't allow that.

So even though the demons were continuing to win their battles, they themselves were being driven into a corner.

"A scorched earth strategy is it..."

Within the general's tent, Halt groaned, troubled.

There was also another reason for his groan—the demon army did have a weakness.

The Machine Gods, those that were their strongest fighting potential, couldn't be used that often.

A Machine God's core was called a magic core, something made to be even more pure than a magic crystal. Filling it with so much mana took an equally frightening amount of labor and effort. Taking into account the Great Collapse that would be arriving soon after this, he wanted to preserve their strength.

It wasn't just Haruto that was troubled. His staff was also deep in thought, brooding over what was to be done.

"Couldn't we just assassinate Prince Sion?"

The one to say that was Rei. The reason she had come up with that sort of idea was due to her skill in intelligence gathering and assassinations. In truth, Haruto had repeatedly carried out assassinations in order to have the Sacred City surrender.

“It wouldn’t work. Prince Sion has strong guards surrounding him, as well as he himself being quite skilled.”

The person to object was Ferna, Halt following up on her statement.

“Yeah, but there’s another problem. We’ll all be in trouble if we can’t finish this battle by the Great Collapse and ruin our world’s fighting strength.”

This was another one of the demon army’s weaknesses.

They had to win. However, they couldn’t beat them too much and annihilate them.

This was a fatal weakness for them.

Yet even so, the demon army approached Lemdria’s Royal Capital.

They had to make plays for decisive battles against troops that held the home ground advantage.

Meanwhile, Lemdria’s army could easily preserve their supply lines due to their short supply routes and could continually retreat without suffering any decisive losses.

This strategy was something their kind had proactively decided on, the crown prince only halfheartedly supporting it.

\*

Meanwhile, the demons’ battles towards Casalia were going overwhelmingly in their favor.

Although it was an important matter in war to suppress the damage taken when defeated them, Casalia didn’t have such great generals as to follow that.

It could be said that through Ogress’ alliance with the demon army, the demons’ logistics division had less work to do.

“I’m just a pack mule again... I’d like to actually do something with my magic though...”

Although Serge was complaining, he understood just how important his

role was.

Ogress sympathizing with the demons had dealt Casalia a major, shocking blow.

Although Ria was the queen of Ogress, she was first a princess of Casalia.

The repeated defeats had broken the spirit of Casalia's leaders.

Just six months after the demons began their invasion, Casalia signed a peace treaty with them.

However, it wasn't something that held any disadvantages towards Casalia, so it didn't detract much from the royal family's dignity.

"But seriously, are you alright with those conditions?"

Riding in a carriage with Asuka, Ria asked her a question.

The condition for peace was that Casalia would cede its wilderness to the demons. It was the same as what had happened with Ogress.

It would be normal to think that the conditions would be much more favorable to the side that held the overwhelming advantage.

But Asuka simply laughed in response.

"Fufun, we've developed terraforming techniques in the Demonlands. That's how we've been able to support so many soldiers. This way, we'll be able to farm outside of wartime."

They were going for colonization. Although it was difficult to actually do in practice, it appears they'd had success with it in the Demonlands.

Besides that, they'd also been successful at various agricultural methods that even held merits for humanity.

Thinking about it, they were beginning to even scratch at the surface of modern agricultural techniques. They'd even be able to improve the crops' breeds through using magic over the course of a millennia.

And it was even easier than that by using Haruto's understanding of science.



There were huge movements even in Lemdria.

South of Lemdria, although having to make a detour, the Krasli Kingdom was beginning to resupply the demon army.

This was the result of Haruto's long-time infiltration and, as far as Lemdria was concerned, was an unexpected smack to the face.

Although it wasn't as though a war between Krasli and Lemdria would begin immediately, it was necessary for Lemdria to send its forces to the south.

The Urban Coalition to the east of Lemdria sat and watched all of this play out.

Since the Urban Coalition had long been warring with Lemdria repeatedly, there were cities popping up that stopped aiding Lemdria.

Although it wasn't as though they'd counted too much on those cities, since they had to separate their military yet again to defend their east, Lemdria was forced into a dilemma.

And then the demon army's invasion began.

They'd had to devote a number of their troops to their supply train, but they still totaled a hundred thousand strong.

Above all, the Demon King stood with them at the forefront.

A carefully selected group of elites commanded the invasion into Lemdria's territory. To deal with this threat, Lemdria sent a host of 300,000. It was commanded by Prince Ryuke Sion. It was Lemdria's greatest war potential.

These two forces clashed in an expanse of vast plains.

The result was an atrocity.

Having knowledge of contemporary warfare and holding air superiority, the demon army made the best use of its magic-specialized races and clashed head-on.

Even Prince Sion, the greatest tactician of the age, was unable to oppose them.

The Machine Gods freely landing within Lemdria's formations easily broke apart and decimated any attempts to make a comeback.

Tactical levels of magic broke through Lemdria's defensive lines and routed their vanguards.

Like this, Lemdria's greatest war potential was defeated.

\*

Lemdria's war potential, its Royal Capital included, still remained. But as to whether or not it could win against the gathered demon army was something that King Ryuke Hollyn was skeptical of.

Even Prince Ryuke Sion had been defeated. He realized that the level of their tactical prowess was simply too different.

A messenger arrived from the demon army.

It was a Dark Elf with dark, tanned skin and silver hair. They'd come to ask for peace under Demon General Rei's name and the conditions weren't at all unfavorable to Lemdria.

They had to give the former empire's territory that had become a wasteland to the demons. That was all.

Withdrawing from the territory that had already been invaded and putting up a buffer zone, it was actually rather advantageous for Lemdria.

This caused a rather heated discussion in their court, but when they tried thinking about it calmly, they truly only had a single choice.

Like this, the humans' greatest nation, Lemdria Kingdom, was forced into coexistence with the demons.

\*

"So it's over..."

Receiving all of the reports in Manesh's court, Ria muttered.

Falling back into the sofa, she looked at the papers. Carla and Guinevere

were sitting on either side of her.

“This will be the end of the demon’s invasion for now, won’t it?”

Guinevere asked. Ria gave her the explanation she’d gotten from Asuka.

“From what I heard, the former empire’s territory should be enough to cover the demons’ population. The supply line to invade down to the southern part of the continent would just be too long.”

The Millennium’s war between humans and demons would come to a close with this. And although there was still postwar processing to deal with, it was still something rather troublesome to deal with.

“It’s finally time, is it...”

Carla muttered. This was the end of the Millennium. Next would be the real trial, the Great Collapse.

“A collision between two worlds, huh. Honestly, I still don’t get what that really means.”

It was simply too abstract. Even with Serge’s knowledge, it was still ambiguous.

But what was definite was that the real thing had yet to come.

\*

Several days later, a messenger from the demons arrived in Manesh’s court.

It was Asuka, someone they’d already grown familiar with. She was visiting the castle as an official envoy.

Seeing the contents of the documents she’d brought, Ria was astonished.

It was inviting each major nation’s leaders to work out measures to take against the Great Collapse in Lemdria’s castle of all things.

“Why is it going to be held in the castle of a country you just recently fought rather than in the former empire’s territory?”

Seeing her be astonished, Asuka spoke with a smile.”

“That’s why His Majesty is amazing. If he’d said to meet in a place under our control, those cowardly humans wouldn’t come now would they?”

It’s as she said. Anyone without the ability to fight like Ria would very likely not want to enter the demons’ lair.

Even so, the time for the meeting was incredibly soon.

“Wow, that’s soon.”

Asuka watched Ria with uncharacteristically serious eyes.

“It’s because the Great Collapse will happen soon.”

Losing the support of humans and demons killing each other, the Soul Cycle had grown weak.

So, naturally, the boundary between worlds grew fuzzy. They would collide before long.

Nodding, Ria said she’d go.

\*

The Great Collapse.

“Let me see just what sort of fight’ll be coming this time...”

A ghastly era that not even the war-loving Ria could comprehend was about to come knocking.

# Chapter 107: The Round Table Meeting

There was a conference room in Lemdria's court. Different from the council room used for ordinary meetings, this was used for the sake of heated disputes and was a secret room defended by magic. In its center was a huge, round table.

Right now, the person sitting the furthest inside was Lemdria's King, Ryuke Hollyn. His body was clad by dignity of someone whose years exceeded seventy. Behind him was the crown prince and Prince Ryuke Sion.

"So soon..."

Just as Hollyn muttered that, there was a knock at the door. An escort knight entered the room.

"Please excuse me. His Majesty, Casalia's King Ryuke Neyas has arrived!"

Together with Hollyn's nod, the large door was opened as Neyas entered the room. Following behind him were civil officials and a half-elf knight that was known as the king's sword.

Hollyn stood up to receive him and greeted him with a light embrace.

"For us to meet face to face like this, I never thought it would happen."

"Good grief."

Neyas sat down immediately next to Hollyn.

The next person to enter the room was Istria's youthful Prince Ryuke Kanon. He was followed by his attendant, Parro, following him both as a truce bearer and as the prime minister.

Kanon bowed to his seniors. Hollyn and Neyas stood to welcome him.

The person to arrive next was a male elf.

His body was considered exceptionally muscular compared to the usual thin elf physique, yet his face was engraved with deep wrinkles despite the eternal youth held by their race.

He was the High Elf of Oomori Woods, Corfus.

From then on, the humans' leaders arrived lead by knights.

Sacred Mountain's Sage Azelford.

From the southern part of the continent, leader of the great house that protects Labra, Zah.

From the southeastern part of the continent, the leader of the Urban Coalition, Oslo.

And then a man who had a smile on his face.

"Ars..."

Hearing Azel's mutter, the humans' expressions all firmed.

"Hello, I'm Demon King Ars."

Ars raised his hand and greeted everyone. Leading a dark elf girl and a young human girl, he sat down in the seat furthest from Hollyn.

Received gazes mixed with both interest and fear, Ars looked somewhat uncomfortable, but that only lasted until his acquaintance arrived.

"Ogress' Archduke, Ryuke Riana-sama has arrived."

Wearing a jet black mantle, Ria entered the room and bowed to those present.

"Yoo."

Ars waved his hand, motioning for her to sit next to him.

"I don't think there'll be any humans that want to sit next to me."

Smiling back at him wryly, Ria sat next to Ars. Behind her was a girl wearing orichalcum armor and the silver-haired Dragonslayer.

\*

"There are still seats left to be filled, but who...?"

Hollyn spoke. Although he was the one who prepared the venue, he was not informed of everyone who would be attending.

The only person who knew who would be filling the remaining eight seats was Ars.

But his question would soon be resolved.

In that area that should have been thoroughly isolated through magic, four men and women appeared.

“I see, so it’s a round table...”

A man whose eyes held no light muttered in admiration.

He sat down in a seat.

“He is the secret society Black Cat’s Company Director, Yamato.”

The person to introduce the famous person with a simple name wasn’t the person himself, but the Demon King.

“His true identity is Saint Emperor Ryuke Shifaka-san though~”

A great stir spread amongst the humans. Despite being stared at intently, Shifaka placed his elbows on the table, interwove his fingers, and placed his chin on them.

“I’m Thor. I was summoned as a Hero two thousand years ago, I was called the Black Knight.”

When the gigantic man introduced himself, the noise increased again.

“I’m Shana Milgrid. You should know my name as the Witch.”

The girl with scarlet hair gave the name she used when she was a comrade of the legendary Hero from one thousand years ago.

“I’m Alvis. I was once referred to as a Great Sage on another continent.”

The young man with ordinary features bowed his head.

“Those four and Azel are Black Cat’s leaders.”

The one to explain was Ars. The human leaders were astonished with their mouths open, unable to speak.

“So who do the other four seats belong to?”

Although she was surprised to some extent, the person who asked the

question with an interested expression on was, as expected, Ria.

“I’d told them the time, but those girls are pretty careless...”

Ars shrugged. But as soon as that movement was finished, a giant vibration shook the castle.

The magic barrier was broken by force and a person teleported into the room.

It was a girl who had fire-like red hair, golden eyes, and a casually wrapped red cloth dressing her.

“Ooh, I made it in time?”

She looked around the room. Her strangely colored eyes would intimidate the average human.

“You’re the first of the God Dragons to arrive, Ohma-san.”

“Really? Well, I was a bit hasty.”

God Dragon Ohma. Her dragon eyes saw Ria and Carla.

“There are two people with the dragon bloodline here? How rare.”

Saying that, she sat down next to Ars.

“A God Dragon...”

Hollyn muttered, virtually lost for words. Contrasting him, Ars explained politely.

“The power of a God Dragon is essential to make it through a Great Collapse. I invited other ones as well.”

Before he finished talking, three more women showed up.

A raven-haired, golden-eyed woman that looked remarkably like Ria—Valis.

A silver-haired, blue-eyed woman that looked vaguely like Carla—Terrew.

A blue-haired, green-eyed woman with a graceful appearance—Lanna.

These four pillars made up the God Dragons that were the world’s guardians.



Most of those attending the meeting had been so intimidated they couldn't speak.

The God Dragons sat next to each other, all looking at Ars.

"You said that you would stop the Great Collapse."

The one to open her mouth was Valis. In response, Ars stood up and quickly bowed his head.

"To be precise, I said that I would prevent the world from being ruined by the Great Collapse."

With that, Ars produced an image in midair through magic.

"Well then, I'll begin my explanation."

"For everyone who does not yet understand the situation concerning humans, allow me to explain from the beginning. The world is like this tree here."

A tree appeared in the image. It would better be called a gigantic tree.

"Although the world grows, pruning is necessary. What happens at this time is a Great Collapse. In exchange for ruining one of two worlds, the other will be able to extend its branches further."

With that, one of the branches was cut away, allowing the other to grow further.

"However, we can forcibly change the direction the branch is growing in to prevent this impact. Many, many sacrifices are needed in order for this to happen and is what we know as the Millennium. The previous two Millenniums succeeded in this with two massive wars occurring even on the other continents, allowing this world's branch to grow."

The branch swerved as it grew.

"However, it is not as though we can repeat this Millennium over and over. By breaking a neighboring branch, we can become a world that does not need a Millennium for tens, no, hundreds of thousands of years. That

is the purpose of this upcoming Great Collapse.”

How many people could understand the meaning behind Ars’ words? A silence filled the room.

“... You’re saying for us to destroy a world, for that?”

The person to open his mouth in this silent pressure was Hollyn.

“This is not war. It is a struggle for our very existence. Fortunately or not, there are practically no humans living on the other continents anymore. The defeated world will have somewhere between 600,000,000 to 1,000,000,000 survivors on the remaining world.”

It sounded like something absurd, but it had actually happened like that three thousand years ago, bringing humans to this world.

“It’s not a definite that we will come out the victor in the fight between our worlds. Perhaps I should have began with that...”

The one to speak such heavy words was Shifaka. The voice of this man that had made it through two Millenniums held a persuasiveness to it. Above all, he was a native from the defeated world.

However, Ars smiled as though he was waiting for that to be said.

“Correct. I would’ve also thought much the same if it were a thousand years ago. But that is no longer the case. We know who our enemies are and can make preparations as well.”

Still carrying on with his theatrics, Ars looked towards Valis.

Valis looked up, her gaze seeming to say that he was being a bother.

“Ars’ words are accurate. I know which world we will be fighting and have even finished analyzing their strengths. We will not be defeated.”

“What kind of world is their world? Are you sure of your analysis?”

Not overawed in the least, Ria inquired. It was a natural question given that they would be wagering their world in this war.

Valis’ answer to her was clear—

“The world’s name is Earth.”

—and cold.

“Your old birthplace.”

# Chapter 108: The Demon King's Hubris

“Earth!?”

Ria bolted onto her feet and gripped the collar of Ars' clothes.

“Are you insane!?”

Ars motioned for the swords moving toward Ria to stop, a troubled look on his face.

Rei and Ferna's swords stopped just away from Ria's neck.

Completely ignoring them, Rei continued to constrict Ars' neck.

“Assuming Labyrinth is right, we'll be connected to the 21st century of Earth. Don't you have tons of people you know there too!?”

“That's why we'll be screening immigrants.”

“Ridiculous... Foremost, the level of civilization between Earth and this world is different. How could we resist nuclear weaponry...”

“We can protect against the destructiveness of nuclear weapons through magic. That includes the radiation as well, of course. Above all, we have Dragons, existences that protect our world.”

Ria's hand slowly let go of Ars.

“Ria...”

Seeing Ria sit back in her chair, Carla gently placed her hand on her shoulder.

Rei and Ferna also resheathed their swords.

“I want to ask you the same. Are you insane?”

The person to ask was Black Knight Thor. A hero from the far distant past, a person who had lived the span of two thousand years.

An existence summoned from Earth to oppose the Demon King.

“Even if we could have a billion people migrate to our world... that means that upwards of six billion people will be killed.”

He felt intimidating, his grave gaze locked on Ars. Even though his spirit had grown old in those two thousand years, he could not allow what Ars was implying. He still had many people back in his birthplace.

“Thor-san...”

Ars’ smile was weak.

“The dice have been cast, there’s no going back.”

“There would be less sacrifices if we continue on how we have, allowing demons and humans to fight a massive war with each other, than this way.”

Ria spoke with an ice-cold voice. But Ars merely shrugged.

“So you intend to continue killing one billion humans, demi-humans, and demons? Moreover, do you intend to repeat that for each Millennium?”

Ria’s thoughts had clouded over. She’d long since heard that the Great Collapse was what happened when two worlds collided, but she never thought that the other world would be Earth.

No, rather, she ought to have taken that into consideration.

Many people had reincarnated from Earth into this world. Out of any world that might collide with them, the one with the highest chance was Earth.

Moreover, Valis had said it in the past—that this world and Earth had once come into contact with each other.

“What is Earth? I know that it is the world we summon heroes from, but...?”

King Hollyn raised his voice to ask a question.

“How much war potential do they have? Is it possible for us to collapse their world first?”

As expected of someone well on in his years, he was fast in recovering from the confusion. He also appeared to understand what Ars was saying.

The one to respond to him was not Ars, however.

“In exchange for my life, it is possible to destroy their world.

It was Dark Dragon Valis.

Closing and concealing her golden eyes, she declared.

“And due to my experience in fighting against the former gods, even us destroying Earth’s gods isn’t an impossible thing. Earth’s peculiar magic shouldn’t be that effective against us, either.”

Dragons.

Ria recalled the sight she’d once witnessed within the depths of the Dark Labyrinth.

The myriad of dragons sleeping within their caves.

If all of those were to dance through skies and overthrow Earth...

Moreover, Earth’s gods.

She wasn’t sure of their existence in her previous life, but she found out they existed upon her reincarnation.

Would she be purposely fighting against those gods that brought her to this world?

If you were to add up all of the various gods passed through the ages from both monotheistic and polytheistic religions, there would probably be a few million.

“Earth’s gods are weak.”

As though seeing through Ria’s thoughts, Valis spoke.

“They are existences created through human imagination to start with. They don’t have physical bodies and only exist as souls. Us dragons are fundamentally different. If they don’t have the humans’ faith, they cannot wield their power.”

Was it like that? The Gift Ria had received from those same gods was a considerably powerful one, though.

“Us demons will disempower Earth’s human’s war potential. We should be enough for their weaker gods as well. But I would like to borrow the dragon race’s power to deal with the chief gods of the primary religions.”

Ars said that to Valis. She was something of a leader to the Dragons. The other God Dragons didn’t speak.

“Of course, us Dragons exist to protect our world.”

Protect the world. In this case, that lead to protecting humans and demons. Ars expected that it would turn into a situation where the Dragons’ power was necessary.

Ria felt regret.

She wanted to curse herself for thanking the demons for helping her in the war against Cordova. Was this the reason behind the human demon symbiosis dream?

“Ria.”

Having not said a word the whole time, Neyas, Ria’s father, spoke.

“Do not shy away from turning another country into a sacrifice for your own. That is a ruler’s duty. Even if... even if you hurt far more lives in doing so.”

His logic was reasonable. All the more in a situation like this one, the fate of their world hanging in the balance.

If what Ars said was true, this would prevent the world from having to go through quite a number of Millenniums in the future to come.

“Father...”

Ria spoke, her voice practically a whisper.

“I am one of the people who reincarnated from Earth...”

\*

Silence filled the room.

“Is that... the truth...?”

Even so, Neyas' voice was hoarse as he spoke.

"It is."

Ria declared, facing everyone.

"My life on Earth came to an end after forty-two years. I died due to a natural disaster and was reborn in this world."

The room once again filled with noise. What meaning this held to the world's kings was something Ria didn't know.

"I know that you spent a longer time on Earth than this world, but is there so much value in protecting Earth?"

Ars asked in a light tone.

"Environmental pollution, population explosion, the disparity between the rich and the poor... I think they'd hit their limit soon enough even if we left them alone. In that case, wouldn't it be a blessing for those of Earth to be brought here, a place where there is still land and resources, a natural world free from pollution?"

He spoke extremely unilaterally and full of hubris.

(Ah, I get it now.)

Ria understood.

This man in front of her truly was the Demon King.

An existence who would calmly speak of massacring innocents and of destroying worlds—the Demon King.

And... he embraced an extreme portion of human wickedness.

"Were you able to understand?"

Facing that Demon King who was even smiling, Ria drew her katana.

She didn't stop her attack just before it landed like Rei and Ferna did, but even so, it was stopped by the Demon King's invisible barrier.

"You're too hot-blooded. We're still in a place to discuss."

The Demon King as he raised his hands exaggeratedly. Rei and Ferna



had already drawn their swords. Behind Ria, Carla had also drew her sword.

\*

“Cease.”

That single word caused the four to drop to their knees.

Dark Dragon Valis stood up slowly.

“The dice have been cast, truly an amusing statement. We can no longer avoid the Great Collapse. That being the case, can you think of anything better for our world than what Ars has suggested?”

She hadn’t said that his way was the best one. But Ars had already prepared for this unavoidable crisis well.

In fact, it could be said that this Millennium ended with the demons’ overwhelming victory. They’d even managed to leave the defenders’, the humans’, war potential virtually in tact.

Even in its conquest of Cordova, Ogress hadn’t had to utilize much of its war potential. This was all as Ars wished.

“Our race supports Ars.”

Valis’ statement was the de facto end to the meeting.

Ria looked around, seeing only people sighing.

Even the past hero, Thor, signed as though in resignation.

Was Ria’s only ally Carla?

“So the reason the present hero was removed... was for this?”

His attitude the same as ever, Shifaka questioned him. He knew that what sent the hero to another world was the power of Water Dragon Lanna.

If that hero who’d been summoned from Earth was still here, he probably would have sided with Ria.

“That... was a bit of a miscalculation. As the Demon King, I’d tried to kill

him immediately. But, he was... putting it simply, he was too strong.”

Ars shrugged. His capricious attitude hadn’t changed, a faint smile on his lips.

“That guy’s magic that shouldn’t have existed in this world and my own magic were polar opposites and started to destroy this world. Clarice-sama, in exchange for her own life, kept the damages to a minimum.

He called the more than three million people that lived in and around the Imperial Capital a ‘minimum’. Human life was treated surprisingly lightly in his words.

“I see, so that was it?”

Valis nodded, her expression unchanging.

“He couldn’t bear the burden of mass murder and requested Lanna to let him to run away from this world.”

“The one to induce him into that was you.”

Not having said a word this whole time, Lanna interjected to lay fault on him.

“Well, that’s how it is. Does anyone have any other questions or suggestions?”

Even though Ars said that, the humans at the table were busy just trying to sort through the information they’d been given.

An emptiness was born in Ria’s heart. Everything she had done thus far, had it all been Ars’ wishes? Had she been playing in the palm of his hand?

“When will the Great Collapse happen, exactly?”

The person to raise his hand and ask that was Alvis.

Knowing when it would come truly was an important matter.

He’d asked that of Ars, but Ars looked towards Valis.

“If you want, immediately. If we leave it to the natural course... in fifty days. Even if I delayed it with my power, it would be one hundred days at the most.”

“Understood. Fifty days will be sufficient.”

Seeing Alvis nod, Thor asked him a question.

“Are you preparing something?”

He wasn't particularly trying to suppress his voice either, so the whole meeting had heard him. Alvis responded, looking around to everyone there.

“Yes, I will raise the Floating Continent.”

\*

The Floating Continent. An existence of legends.

It's said to have been a giant continent that traveled the world. It was only recorded in documents, no one had actually seen it.

But there were many people familiar with the world's mysteries located in this place.

“I see, that truly would become a powerful tool.”

Shifaka nodded, the Black Cat's members agreeing.

“You can prepare it within these fifty days?”

Hearing Azel's question, Alvis nodded.

“It had a self-maintenance function to start with. If you helped, it wouldn't even take a week.”

“The Floating Continent... really exists...?”

Prince Kanon, the youth who hadn't spoken at all so far, had his eyes wide open and sparkling.

“Yes. I can show you, if you want. It's actually more like a big island, though, it's not as large as a continent.”

The various royals stirred yet again once Alvis confirmed its existence.

“Humans had originally come to this world using it. It had been a military base for the former Imperial Capital, but they landed it in the waters near the Dragon Fang Continent so that they could reduce its

mana consumption.”

Only one person was left frowning after Shifaka spoke

And that was Ria, cursing her own thoughtlessness.

Ria had spent forty-two years on Earth. She'd seen all sorts of emotion, coming into contact with much of it herself.

And so she knew that Earth's humans were not simply foolish, they also held a certain beauty.

Ars probably wasn't aware of it.

“Demon Kind, how old were you when you were summoned to this world?”

“Fifteen. It's horrible, if they would've waited for me to turn eighteen, I could've put the knowledge I'd learned in high school to use here in this world.”

“You were only living on Earth for fifteen years. Isn't that why you have no affection towards your birthplace and can do something so outrageous?”

Hearing her words, Ars thought with his hand on his chin.

“Who knows? I can definitely feel that my sentiments have worn down over the years, but I intend to save my family and friends I left behind. It might be a bit unfair, but that's the extent of my attachment. You can also give priority to those you want.”

Quite arrogant, this Demon King.

Even though he himself recognized how deplorable his actions were, he accepted it. Was this what a ruler should be?

Ria went silent, the meeting ending on that note.

# Chapter 109: A Choice

Ars handed magic tools capable of communication and teleportation to the various countries' leaders.

His intention was to make it so that their relations would improve, but setting aside communication, teleportation magic tools weren't things that they could make. Once again, the Demonlands' technological prowess was demonstrated to the various leaders.

He even placed one in front of Ria.

"If you do come up with a better way, please, let me know."

Ria watched him leave with very unenthused eyes.

A while later, she leaned back into her chair.

"Ria."

Gently placing a hand on Ria's shoulder Carla called out her name.

"Let's go home and think about what to do."

She leaned over to whisper into Ria's ears.

"There's still some time left."

\*

Once the two had soared back to Manesh at full speed, they gathered up all of their domestic big shots with the help of Serge's magic.

This included the Ogre King, as well as the beastkin and dwarves' chiefs. The most noticeable among them was an elf with faintly shining golden hair.

"I'm pleased to meet you all, humans and demi-humans."

The elf bowed and greeted everyone gracefully.

"My name is Labyrinth. I am the person who manages Labyrinth City's labyrinth."

Yes, this was the true form of Labyrinth, who usually took the form of a

fairy.

“Still though, our opponent is going to be the Earth...?”

“I give up...”

As reincarnated individuals, Serge and Labyrinth both sighed, but that wasn't even the main course.

“What does two worlds colliding even mean in the first place?”

When Guinevere asked about something important, Ria urged Serge on with a look.

Serge began explaining from the vague video remaining in his memories, the hall was filled with noise for a long while.

\*

“So, can we win?”

The Ogre King, perhaps the most hot-blooded person in the room, spoke up.

“We should be able to. At any rate, Earth doesn't have any weapons that could destroy a planet... at least I think not?”

Serge and Labyrinth nodded in consent, backing Ria's claim up.

Earth's destructive weapons were very likely better than this world's norm.

But it should be impossible for them to destroy a planet as Valis would be.

“At the very least... the troops of the place heroes are summoned from can defeat anything other than the Dragons. It should be a different story if we use magic, though. If you want to take on their armies physically, you'd need to be as strong as Nee-chan or Carla-san.”

Even ogre warriors would be riddled with holes after taking on machine gun fire.

“Anti-tank rifles should be able to even take out a giant, and there's tens of thousands of them. Our country's troops wouldn't stand a chance.”

When Serge explained with a shrug of his shoulders, noise once again filled the hall.

This world's military couldn't even begin to dream of competing against all of Earth's developed countries' militaries.

Even if they only took America into account, they'd still probably be defeated.

That's excluding the demon troops, though.

However, there were existences that flipped everything on its head.

Dragons. The God Dragons in particular.

How would Earth be able to deal with existences that could destroy planets?

\*

The report done with, everyone took a break.

Ria laid down onto her cushioned sofa when she returned to her office.

"Nee-chan, what are we going to do?"

The ones to come into her room were Carla, Guinevere, Serge, Labyrinth, and Irina. It's besides the point, but most of them were women.

"What's your thoughts on it?"

"Honestly... for me, as long as I can save the people I knew in my previous life, I don't mind if the Earth is destroyed."

Even when Ria looked at him in amazement, Serge looked serious. It didn't appear as though he was joking around.

"Me too. My home is that labyrinth."

Labyrinth agreed as well. Two of the three reincarnated people there believed that the destruction of their birthplace was something that couldn't be prevented.

No, if you included the Demon King and the rest, wouldn't that make Ria the odd one?

Was she the one in the wrong?

“But Nee-chan, if you take another path, I’ll support you. Probably.”

Serge smiled as he spoke. He was a bit vague, but he’d definitely be her ally.

“Ria, as you said there, I believe that if you cause another millennial human-demon war, we can avoid the Great Collapse, even now. If Ogress declares itself an enemy of the demons, Casalia and Lemdria might do so as well.”

Carla was aware of the struggle taking place within Ria, which is why she said that.

“I don’t believe that would work.”

But Guinevere disagreed with her.

“Both King Hollyn and King Reyas should know what is best for their country. It would be impossible for humans to win a fight against the demons the way they are now. Besides, Ria.”

She looked at Ria not with her usual teasing, but with sincerity.

“Right now, you carry this country on your back. Regardless of your previous life, Ogress’ everything has been entrusted to you.”

Oh, right.

The spirit that was herself. What let her be her.

What was it that gave Ria the will to stand? What was it that was deep within her core?

Even in this world, she’d dashed out of the Royal Palace to go on an adventure.

It was her craving for strength. Her will to survive.

It was something she’d cultivated in her previous life. She was different from the others who had reincarnated.

So long as there was no other option, Ria would not abandon her affection for Earth.



She was of two minds on it.

Regardless of her previous life, what she now was was something of this world.

Even so, she could not cast away her hesitation.

She needed something to sever her hesitation. What was needed for that?

In the end, Ria chose to fight.

\*

Ria picked up the communication machine she'd received from the Demon King.

As a joke, it was shaped like a cellphone. He probably hadn't chosen to make it look like a smartphone since it wasn't advanced enough?

With a method of operation she'd long since began to forget, she managed to get in contact with the correct individual.

[Hello, this is the Demon King speaking.]

"It's me."

[That was fast. Did you think of something good?]

"Please fight me."

There was a long pause.

[... Run that by me again?]

"It's just the type of person I am, it's the only way I can think."

That was the conclusion Ria had arrived at.

[Don't wanna. There's no advantage for me.]

"If you win, you will have Ogress Kingdom's full support. Carla and Guinevere included."

She pointedly ignored the agitated Guinevere standing behind her.

[Still not enough. There's a good possibility that the demon army will

collapse if I die. With that, various races would rampage around and might even bring about a massive war between humans and demons. That must not happen.]

“If you refuse, Ogress will use everything it has to eliminate the demon army. You cannot refute the possibility that Casalia and Lemdria will follow suit, can you?”

[... The possibility of that is low.]

“But it’s not zero, now is it?”

There was yet another long pause.

[... Why are you so stubborn... Even if Earth was your previous life’s birthplace, aren’t you a human of this world? Since you know which side will win, isn’t it best for you to protect your country?]

“Sorry, but that’s just who I am. I have to do it.”

The silence continued. Ars sighed deeply.

[A one-on-one duel?]

“Yes.”

[Do you mind if I specify the time and location? Also, anything goes with weapons and magic?]

“I don’t mind, but the sooner the better. Please decide right now, if you can.”

[Such a hasty person...]

“Sorry, but that’s as much as I can concede.”

This was Ria’s decision.

This fight would decide not only the destiny of Ogress, but also the destiny both Earth and this world.

Self-mockingly, Ria admitted that she was just that kind of person.

[Three days from now. Noon standard time. The skies above the former Imperial Capital. Two witnesses each. Sound good?]

“Understood. And that’s fine. Thanks.”

[... Don’t mention it.]

With that, the communication was cut.

\*

“And that’s what happened.”

What Ria saw as she looked around to everyone were various kinds of magnificent expressions.

“I’m going with you.”

Carla spoke, a calm smile on her face.

“Really, I don’t care anymore.”

Guinevere held back her anger and shrugged.

“I’ll go as the other person, then.”

Serge was as candid as ever.

“I don’t think anything will change even if you win, though?”

Labyrinth’s brows knit.

“Ria-chan, why are you going to fight?”

Appearing as though she truly did not understand human behavior, Irina tilted her head to the side.

To answer that, Ria replied:

“Because there is a mountain.” [1]

\*

Footnotes:

1. This is a reference to what Ria responded to Guinevere with way back at the end of Chapter 58.

# Chapter 110: Showdown

There was a gigantic hole in the surface of the wasteland.

With a diameter of approximately thirty kilometers, it truly was a gigantic hole. This was the former location of the Imperial Capital. No traces of that remained.

In the sky above it, there were seven figures.

Three to the west: Ria, Carla, Serge.

Three to the east: Ars, Ferna, and a man they hadn't seen before.

Looking at him with Dragon Eyes, his level was beyond 200. Ria thought that he would definitely bring Rei along like how he'd done with the meeting, but she was busy with the demon army's management.

Between the two groups was a woman whose hair was colored like a blazing fire.

Fire Dragon Ohma. The youngest and most inquisitive of the God Dragons.

"It's a bit different than we arranged...?"

Receiving Ria's gaze and hearing her question, Ohma smiled.

"What, there's no way I could miss out on such an interesting contest, right? Besides, you need someone here that could stop you if it gets too far."

(So that's Ars' insurance?)

Unlike Ria, Ars knew the value of his own life. He judged that Ohma would be able to stop the match before he was killed if he lost the match.

For Ars, this match was something that was unnecessary. Doing something like fruitlessly risking your own life was foolish.

Meanwhile, would Ohma make a move if Ria were about to lose?

No, would Ars even try to take Ria's life to start with?

It felt like he wouldn't. How to put it—Ars felt like the kind of human

that made use of lives efficiently.

If someone was going to die, he'd make the most use out of it happening. Even during war, the demons' army hadn't annihilated their enemies.

Ars held the resolution of a king. Different from Ria.

Ria was a human who lived for the sake of fighting. Valis herself had chosen an utterly unqualified person to be her own successor.

"Ah well, it's fine."

Whatever the results would be, for now, she just wanted to fight.

"Shall we get to it?"

With that, Ria drew Nagasone Kotetsu.

\*

"Oi hold up, that katana's weird! Why isn't its blade chipped after taking hits from an orichalcum holy sword!?"

After exchanging a few blows, Ars shouted out in surprise.

"Because it's Nagasone Kotetsu."

"Why's Nagasone Kotetsu in this world then!?"

"Because I made it with genesis magic!"

She attacked with her Level 9 Swordsmanship skill once again. And she came to realize something.

Ars' swordsmanship was inferior to Ria's. To be more precise, he was worse at close combat.

She wondered why it was like that despite living for a thousand years, but he was probably concentrating on other things. If things kept on as-is, Ria would be able to end this without Ohma's intervention.

Her instant-kill stab found its mark within Ars' bosom.

At that moment, Ars' figure vanished. Not surprised in the least, she sent a flying sword slash upwards.

Ria's body moved in accordance to her sixth sense.

A sword made its way through her Dragon Fighting Spirit and sent her shoulder armor flying.

The two barely passed by each other as they took a small distance, facing each other off.

"Teleportation, huh..."

Ars had used teleportation magic, something that should've required an incredible amount of concentration to pull off, in an instant.

"Correct. It's a trump card of mine, but it looks like that wasn't enough."

She could see how relaxed Ars was. Seeing as how it was 'a' trump card of his, he probably still had two or three more.

"It appears as though I'm at a disadvantage in close quarters, so I'll just..."

In that instant, a barrier surrounded Ria. Immediately afterwards, he invoked a certain magic.

Thermonuclear Darkness Exploding Hell.

He was attacking Ria with a destructive force even more condensed than the one Carla had used.

"I did it... or not."

Along with Ars' mutter, the barrier was torn and she dashed out of it.

Ars was hit by Ria's reverse cross slash, his body flying upward into the sky.

"— The abyss comes, returning all to eternity —"

Together with a short incantation, a darkness spread from within Ars' hands. No, it wasn't darkness...?

It was a magic that returned everything to nothingness. It's the spell that the present hero had used when he fought against him.

"Ruin."

A power of nothingness scattered about, eating away at space as it approached Ria. It immediately became apparent that this wasn't something that her Dragon Fighting Spirit could even hope of defending against.

She dodged with all she had. Her left arm had disappeared, eaten by the darkness.

“— Let there be light —”

Meanwhile, Ars continued speaking.

“Divine Retribution.”

This time, a beam of light attacked Ria at what was literally the speed of light. This attack, however, was cancelled out by her Darkness Dragon Fighting Spirit.

“I'd expect no less of the Demon King.”

Giving a ghastly smile, Ria looked up to Ars.

Her left arm had already been regenerated. Even the endurance it took to do so was regenerating at a rapid pace.

“I thought I was going to die for a moment there.”

“That Ruin magic was my second trump card though...”

Despite sweating down his back, Ars still didn't break his act of playing the fool.

He was at a disadvantage in close combat. Having said that, not even his magic attacks had any effect.

This girl was stronger than the Hero.

Even if she was a reincarnated individual, her just being able to reach Level 230 was strange. Even Ars, someone who'd lived a thousand years, was just barely under 300.

And there was such a difference between the gap in their levels and how well they could fight.

Moreover, she even had a Gift that was more amazing than Hero and

Demon King.

This was Dragon's Bloodline? To be honest, she was even stronger than the Demon King he'd fought a millennium ago.

She alone was giving him the same kind of tension it took the five Black Cats to give. A literal monster. Only she could succeed Valis.

He felt that he could beat her if he hit her with Ruin directly. However, she wouldn't give him any chances like that.

"It's no use. You really are stronger than me. I'll just lose if we keep this up."

"Nonsense. I know that you're still hiding something."

"No, you really are stronger. I truly do still have trump cards, but they are things meant for the Great Collapse."

"So you'll just sit there and die?"

Ria's murderous intent thickened. Ars looked toward Ohma, but she didn't look like she intended to step in, given the grin on her face.

"Oh well. I'll just have to show you, then."

Ars prepared himself.

Ria truly was stronger than Ars. However, as there were no holds barred on what they could use, Ars could use his trump cards.

"Summon."

A giant magic formation emerged.

"Demon King Machine God."

It was a black giant. Outfitted in armor, it was a union of science and magic.

It had six pairs of wings and two sets of arms. Each of its hands wielded a different weapon.

"An individual cannot win against this."

Ars spoke quietly.



A short sword was drawn from the Machine God's arm. An ultrasonic vibration sword. This was a blade of destruction that could even tear through orichalcum.

Ria evaded at full speed. This robot was, despite its size, beyond quick. Guinevere's golem's performance was simply incomparable to it.

After she evaded, it took out another weapon with its other hand. It was a small warhammer compared to its massive build, but even so, it was plenty large enough to crush Ria.

Standing still in midair, Ria tried to catch its blow, but even with her Superhuman Strength Gift, it was impossible for her.

Blasted away several kilometers, she smashed into the ground.

"Do you like it? This thing is mass produced in the Demonlands. Well, their overall performance is a bit lower, but they can even withstand the blast of a nuclear explosion."

Ria could hear Ars' voice from somewhere. Spitting out the dirt that got in her mouth, she quickly stood back up.

She put Nagasone Kotetsu away. No matter how much she strengthened it with magic, it probably wouldn't have been able to tear through the golem's armor.

"I'll use my trump card, too."

Ria placed her hands together in front of her chest. Separating them slowly, a pitch-black sword appeared in the space between her palms.

Born from the Dark Dragon's fang, this was the world's strongest weapon. The katana by the name of Gallach.

"Now's the time for us to really get this going."

She flourished Gallach. With that swing, the atmosphere itself was sliced through and a mountain some distance away was destroyed.

"... That's new."

Ars muttered in a shaky voice.

“Now then, let’s see how you’ll stop THIS!”

A clash between a giant robot produced through the synthesis of all of the Demonlands’ technology and a godsword forged through the Dwarves’ work on the Dark Dragon’s power.

Wasn’t this something that could be called the reproduction of the age of legends?

“Haaaaaaah!”

Together with a terrifying vigor, Ria slashed at the Machine God. It protected its body by using its wings as a shield, but the blade tore through them, continuing to mar its armor.

“Ruin.”

A magic formation appeared on the Machine God’s armor as the emptiness of ruin assaulted Ria.

Ria deflected—rather, flicked it away with Gallach.

“Why didn’t Ruin work!?”

Even while shouting that, Ars shot a countless amount of nothingness at Ria.

Soaring at a high speed, Ria flung out a shock wave caused by Gallach.

“Subspace Barrier.”

The shock wave disappeared.

“Reverse.”

And reappeared, this time aimed at Ria.

“Hahah!”

Laughing, Ria cut through it.

A spear shot out from the Machine God towards her, followed by a battle axe that used the instant she dodged to attack.

“Uraaaaah!”

That giant black battle axe was cut in twain.

Physical attacks didn't make their way to Ria. Neither did magic.

It was the same for Ria, though, as her flying slashes didn't land. Neither was she able to close the gap again to make an attack.

Defeat would be met by whoever first ran out of mana or endurance. That was the situation.

However, Ria held the disadvantage.

Let alone fighting with it, Gallach absorbed her mana just by wielding it. Ars, on the other hand, was able to fight this protracted battle by relying on the magic stone's mana embedded within the Machine God.

However, the first one to make a move in this deadlock was Ars.

He threw his sword at Ria. She deflected that giant mass of metal with Gallach.

The opening produced by that was slight, but that opening was exactly what Ars desired.

"Seal Release."

The Machine God's armor was blown away from within.

What the golem turned into was a giant of light that absorbed mana from its magic stone.

What manifested was something previously sealed by the dragons, another world's God.

\*

"Wha—..."

'What the hell' is what Ria wanted to ask.

Its mana far surpassed her own. Not even her Dragon Eyes could see its capabilities.

After shedding its armor, its body had expanded to being several kilometers tall. Its head pierced the clouds.

"It's a God that fought against this world three thousand years ago.

Maybe you've heard of it?"

This world had Dragons. It had Gods as well.

But it's said that virtually all of those gods fell three thousand years ago, the rest sealed away.

Sacred City worshiped those sealed Gods, but in this world where Dragons were absolute existences, the faith towards those Gods was incredibly small.

Even so, those Gods still existed. And now, one stood right before her.

"And now I'm out of trump cards. It's your win if you still have something, though."

"This katana here was my only trump card. I'll stop it with this."

Still holding her katana, Ria looked up at the God.

\*

"Something like that seriously got left out... I mean really, how's he even controlling it?"

No one was next to Ohma to hear her mutters.

But in the next instant, something appeared.

"It must have been a God that was sealed in the demons' area. It's probably being controlled by that magic stone there."

She had silvery hair and Dragon Eyes.

Wind Dragon Terrew. An entity that existed anywhere and everywhere within this world's atmosphere.

Not surprised at her sudden appearance, Ohma felt admiration.

"Woow, the human race is awesome. They can even subjugate Gods?"

"That's because he's the Demon King."

"Terrew-sama, Ohma-sama."

When they looked over to who called them, it was Carla with an unusually desperate expression on her face.

“Could you two please stop this fight with your power?”

Unlike the disinterested Ohma, Terrew gazed straight toward Carla.

“I saw it back that... but you truly do seem to draw from my bloodline... as well as the bloodline of the fallen gods? What an interesting lineage...”

Not granting Carla’s wish, Terrew put her hand up to her chin.

“Come to think of it, there had been that oddball who produced children with humans, is it that bloodline? Even so...”

Carla grew fretful seeing Terrew mutter to herself, but the first one to respond was Ohma.

“Don’t worry about it~. It’s not over at aaaall~!”

But what Carla was seeing happen was Ria’s figure be tossed this way and that through the God’s power.

He had decided to be an observer. However, she couldn’t bear to lose Ria.

Even if Ria didn’t want her to, even if it was just her ego, Carla believed that she had to stop this fight.

“Just wait and see, the real thing’s about to kick off. Kishishi.”

Ohma laughed.

\*

The God’s power was overwhelming.

Even when she scratched it with Gallach’s blade, it repaired itself immediately.

Could not even this fang of darkness beat this mass of light?

Its gigantic arm and the wind pressure it brought about striking Ria’s body, her body, something that she had definitely reinforced, was being ripped apart.

That arm soon enough struck Ria down, embedding her into the ground.

“Ah...”

Her limbs were smashed. Her internal organs ruptured.

Her skull had cracked.

Was this it?

This God, it was probably weaker than Valis. Even so, it was far stronger than Ria. Even those at the top still had to gaze up to others.

Did she not have any ways to beat this thing?

Even if she held Gallach in her hand, if Ria herself ran out of strength, it wouldn't be able to demonstrate its might.

Was this not enough?

To start with, this wasn't a match where she thought about winning or losing. This was just her selfishly wanting to draw a line within herself.

She couldn't win against something like this. She went this far, so her friends and family on Earth should be able to forgive her.

Had her obligations not already been fulfilled? It should be fine if she closed her eyes and slept.

However, there was something that pleaded her.

Gallach.

The sacred treasure born from Dark Dragon Valis' fang.

It was pleading, pleading to not stop there.

If you think I still have power, please, tell me where it is.

—Blood.

—The blood flowing within your body. What constitute your body and soul.

—Your Dragon's Bloodline.

Gallach and Ria formed a resonance. Her tattered body reconstructed itself.

A new strength was born.

The God that had pummeled her into the ground lifted its fist.

Black scales. Elongated neck. Extended wings.

Fangs. Claws. A tail. Dragon Eyes.

What had emerged from beneath that fist... was a Darkness Dragon.

# Chapter 111: Dragon's Bloodline

“Th-that’s...”

Ria’s form changed before Carla’s eyes.

An existence she’d previously fought by placing her life on the line, a Black Dragon.

But the body before her right now was far more colossal than that time. Its full length was comparable to even that God’s.

“It’s a giant monster battle...”

His soul practically falling out, Serge also muttered. However, not even those stories would encompass a scale as large as what was happening.

Existences whose bodies were similar to the masses of the largest mountains were duking it out, each blow easily holding the destructive force to level a city.

“Woah, you guys, come over here and don’t leave my side yeah? I’ll protect you for right now.”

Following what Ohma told them to do, Carla and Serge went over to her. If a human body got hit by those attacks, it’d definitely pop.

Terrew looked in the direction of the demons. They didn’t seem to feel like moving.

“Really, it turned into such a ridiculous thing.”

Someone appeared next to Ohma.

With jet black hair and Dragon Eyes, she closely resembled Ria.

Dark Dragon Valis had made an appearance.

Ohma didn’t even ask why she was here. Next to Terrew was a light blue-haired Dragon, Lanna.

Not even God Dragons, beings that held an immense strength, could treat this battle as someone else’s affair.

“That girl should be a person of our world by now, so why is she so



attached to her original one?”

Unable to understand, Valis shook her head.

In truth, not even a fellow reincarnator like Serge could fully understand it.

There was magic in this world. He'd even managed to work his way into the nobility through his own cheat-like power.

He was an everyday student in his former life, but now she was in a position that allowed him to converse with this world's leaders. It could even be said that his dreams had come true.

But Ria was different.

From what he'd been told before, she had chosen a somewhat unusual occupation for herself and had lived the life she wanted.

Hesitating in destroying the world she raised her was a reasonable thing.

As an aside, according to what Labyrinth had told him, Labyrinth was a girl that refused to go to school in her previous life. Thanks to that, she even kept herself closed up in a labyrinth now.

When he explained that, Valis sighed gently.

“It might be better to erase her memory...”

That would do something for sure.

Ria's actions were clearly being influenced by her former life. If not, even with her Gift, she wouldn't have arrived at the current situation.

Even growing to the point that she'd be able to obtain Valis' power as her successor was doubtful.

“How about you all have that chat later?”

Ohma returned Valis' concentration on the spectacle happening before them.

The climax of the battle was about to happen.

A battle between a God and a Dragon was a terrifying sight.

Heaven and Earth shook, lightning rain poured from the skies, and magma rose from down in the former Imperial Capital's underground. The wind blew, creating a storm that scraped and lashed the ground.

Valis and Lanna had erected a barrier in order to prevent too terrible a disaster, but attacks would occasionally pierce through it and cause an explosion far in the distance.

Most of the God's magic was repelled by the Dragon's scales, not even a meteor shower would penetrate them.

It was same for the Dragon's power, though, as hardly any of it made it all the way to the God. Even its darkness breath, something that could destroy all creation, was obstructed by its light and was unable to reach it.

It had turned into an all-out melee in the end.

The God's fists, feet, and head assaulted the Dragon's body.

Meanwhile, the Dragon's claws, tail, and fangs pierced the God's body.

Witnessing this mythical battle, Carla felt an impulse surge within her own body.

Bearing both the blood of a God and of a Dragon, Carla felt as though she could see this battle's outcome.

The Dragons had once destroyed the Gods.

And now, the fight taking place before her was between one of those Dragons and one of those Gods.

Ria... would win.

\*

Inside the battle, Ria's consciousness had grown faint.

She felt neither pain nor emotion, fighting simply on instinct.

With her claws, with her fangs, and with her tail.

Exposing the God's flesh by unleashing a breath at close range, she bit

into it with her fangs.

It mended itself, but she has certainly given it a wound.

Meanwhile, the God's power was unable to pierce the Dragon's scales.

"Ruin."

With that sole word, a blade of nothingness sliced into the Dragon's body.

It severed one of its wings, but even then, the Dragon's assault didn't cease.

Even when a spear of nothingness pierced through its body, the Dragon lived.

Even when its heart was penetrated, the Dragon lived.

"How can I win against something like this..."

At the very center of the God's body, Ars was at wit's end.

When he fought together with Carla, Guinevere, and the others against that Dragon in Manesh, they overcame the Dragon's defenses with magic, allowing Carla's sword to penetrate its heart.

This thing was a Dragon. She had also seen them a millennia beforehand, so there was no mistaking it.

But this presence in front of him held a strength and fleshy body that was incomparably stronger than those Dragons.

Was it... a God Dragon? No, that was impossible. He'd seen Valis' strength back in that Millennium and it was much, much stronger.

In truth, Ars had one last trump card. However, it wasn't something that he should use now.

"I give up, I surrender, it's my loss!"

The God's arm tapped the Dragon, but the Dragon's attack didn't end.

Its breath broke the God's magical barriers, its fangs piercing its neck.

No, its fangs almost piercing its neck.

A gigantic dragon easily double the size of this Black Dragon sealed its movements.

It was Dark Dragon Valis.

Its arms pulled back on Ria's neck and wing, keeping her away from Ars.

Seeing Ria still continue to rage, three more Dragons made a move.

Four God Dragons.

Things which don't even make a move during Millenniums, and four of them at that.

Gigantic figures that dwarfed even the largest mountains pinned down Ria's body.

Having turned into a Dragon, Ria still attempted to struggle, but Valis absorbed her mana.

Losing her mana, her Dragon body vanished.

Holding onto Gallach and her armor in tatters, Ria collapsed.

\*

When she opened her eyes, there was an Angel.

"Have you woken up, Ria?"

No, it was a familiar face.

Judging by her postured, she was being given a lap pillow by Carla.

"What... happened..."

Even while saying that, her memories were returning. Memories dominated by killing intent and the impulse to fight were coming back to her, causing her to feel sick.

When she placed her hand against her forehead, she felt sweat covering it. Carla wiped that sweat off with her handkerchief.

"Did I... lose?"

Her memories from its end were still fuzzy. But it felt like she'd reached a stalemate of some sort.

“No, it was your win.”

When she turned to look at who said that, it was Ars, who was sitting on the ground.

“I... won?”

“Yep. I surrendered. But you didn’t stop attacking me, so the God Dragons had to step in and stop you.”

What?

The battle’s conclusion ended with something so sloppy?

“Valis and the others?”

“Right here.”

Ria turned to look at the source of the voice and saw the four God Dragons standing.

“So, what will you do with your winner’s privilege? You’ll have to excuse me for running away if you tell me to hand over my life or something though.”

Ars stood up as he said that. For a loser, he still had plenty of composure.

“I was intending to have a fight with my life on the line though...”

Staggering, Ria stood up as well. She places her hand on her waist out of habit and realized her katana wasn’t there.

“Where is Nagasone Kotetsu?”

She felt Gallach’s existence. It was within Ria.

But not Nagasone Kotetsu. The katana she’d used like an extension of her arm was gone.

“I was able to collect it just in case, but, well...”

Saying that, what Serge presented to her was her beloved katana... split in two.

Seeing Ria look as though she was about to cry, Ars held out his hand.

“Loan it to me for a moment. I’ll mend it.”

“You can mend it?”

Although it was weird to mend the weapon of an unreconciled opponent to begin with, as a weapon, Nagasone Kotetsu wasn’t a threat to Ars.

“Restore.”

Nagasone Kotetsu regained its original appearance after being covered with a magic that was meant to be used on living bodies.

“You should be able to use this magic like this as well if you live for a thousand years.”

Seeing Ria look at it as though intrigued, Ars passed Nagasone Kotetsu back to her, handle first.

It was a moment that would have allowed her to cut him easily if she wanted to. Within that short moment of tension, Ria produced a sheath with her sparsely remaining mana and put Nagasone Kotetsu in it.

Ria gazed at Ars, who was sighing exaggeratedly in relief, with half-opened eyes.

“What are your intentions?”

“Nothing really... I just thought it’d be fine if I took the chance to fix it for you.”

Ars shrugged his shoulders. However, he looked at her with an unusually serious expression on his face.

Speaking of which, he’d always given the impression that he held a slight smile.

“So then, what do you want to do?”

\*

“What do I want?”

“The winner’s privilege, yeah? Will you cause another human-demon war? Or perhaps... cause the Great Collapse? Either way, the God Dragons will support neither you nor I. That is for certain.”

In truth, Ria didn't think that she'd win. She'd fought against the Hero from one thousand years ago and who was the current Demon King. She thought that his power was on an entirely different level.

Even now, her winning didn't feel real.

No, maybe it didn't feel real for another reason?

She remembered becoming a Dragon. But was it alright for her to call that her own strength?

It wasn't her swordsmanship, nor her martial arts. It was the strength of the Gift she'd gotten when she was born into this world. Although it was Ria's power, it wasn't a power that was related to her previous life.

"What to do..."

Seeing Ria look troubled with her arms crossed in front of her, Ars once again shook his head in amazement.

"You haven't even decided...? Why did you even decide to fight?"

"Onee-chan generally doesn't think about things beforehand..."

Ria didn't even complain when Serge said something rude about her. Because she really hadn't thought about what she'd do after the battle.

Ria thought that she would come to a decision if she fought. At least if she died, she wouldn't have to worry. That's what she felt, at least.

"Well, there aren't many choices. Will you cooperate with me and fight against Earth? Or will you oppose me and cause a human-demon war? ... There's also the choice of siding with Earth, but I don't recommend it."

Ars pointed out the choices he'd thought over many times. He had eventually chosen to destroy Earth from those three, though.

"If you fight against this world to protect Earth, you will fight us as well."

Valis said that quietly, but it was a death sentence. Even if she decided to stand with Earth, the result of that would be obvious.

"Besides, the world you call Earth will perish either way."

Well that was some new information.

“It’s the first time I’ve heard of that...?”

“I didn’t say? From the start, Earth is a world where people with strong souls can’t be reborn into. Nevertheless, the world is teeming with humans. People coming here after being reincarnated or summoned from virtually the same era is the same thing as ripe fruits falling from their tree.”

What?

So even if she did nothing, the result wouldn’t be any different?

Humans only came from the twenty-first century even though the flow of time was different... Ria thought it was strange, but she hadn’t looked into the matter.

“If you told me that first...”

“I thought someone would have told you by now.”

Valis spoke calmly, Ars and the other God Dragons nodding in agreement.

“It’s the first time I’ve heard about it too...”

Serge muttered.

“Well, it’s not for sure if it’ll be able to just barely make it through the twenty-first century or not.”

As Ars explained, the Earth was a world whose trunk was thick even two thousand years ago and had reached its limits due to the humans living on it.

Their explosive population growth seemed to be the ultimate cause and she certainly did remember educational programs talking about the population soaring up through the previous century.

As a result, it became impossible for the world named Earth to give board to all of humanity.

“There was a phenomenon similar to the Millennium on Earth as well that would decrease their world’s population through war, but not on a



scale that would cover the whole world.”

“But there should have been clues to solving the energy and food problems?”

Nuclear and methane hydrate should have been replacing crude oil, while food production should have been increasing through gene manipulation.

“Even so, the Earth will perish. Its branches will extend no further.”

Valis declared indifferently.

Even if she’d asked how she knew something like that, she’d probably answer by saying she knew because she knew.

“And that’s why I think it’d actually be a kindness to accept immigrants from the Earth. Our technical civilization isn’t too developed, but we can make up for a considerable part of it through the application of magic.”

“So there was only one choice from the start, wasn’t there...”

Ria sighed.

There was no choice but to destroy the Earth.

“Ah, no, if you used your power, there is one other way.”

Ars held up a finger as he spoke.

“You just have become a Dragon, go to Earth, and decrease the population with your power. You could probably prolong its end by a bit if you reduce them to around a billion people.”

Ars continued by saying the best way would be to turn China and India into no man’s land. They certainly were areas with huge populations though...

“You could also go with destroying the United States if we’re going to start talking about resource consumption, but the world’s power balance will collapse if that country gets destroyed, so yeah... ah, you could actually go with that and leave it up to the resulting wars... no, leaving Russia alone might cause something else entirely...”

“If you go to solve Earth’s problems, the will migrate the demons onto the other continents and the balance can be kept. It isn’t impossible for our connected worlds to separate, either.”

Following up on Valis’ statement, Ars held up his finger again.

“That’s great. It’d come with Earth’s population being decreased, but they won’t have to lose their birthplace. This world won’t have to have a human-demon war, either. I might be the one to say it, but isn’t that the best option?”

This man truly was frivolous when it came to lives. He came to a decision through numbers alone.

Was that a Demon King’s fate?

“I’ll fight... against the Earth.”

In a small voice, Ria whispered.

“And we’ll accept immigrants. We’ll allow the Earth to perish.”

Hearing Ria’s words get stronger as she continued to speak, Ars made a deplorable expression.

“Why’d you decide that? I think my plan would be a lot easier.”

“As for us, we believe that destroying the Earth would be the best. That would allow this world’s longevity to extend an overwhelming amount.”

Although Valis said that, that isn’t why Ria made that choice.

“We’ll also have to take care of the people of Earth that come here as immigrants. Just reducing their numbers is irresponsible.”

Ars felt that it would just be an excessive thing, but nodded nevertheless.

“I can’t sympathize, but I can understand. I don’t want to do something that sounds so troubling as someone in charge though. Well, I’ll follow what the winner says.”

Ria’s blood spoke to her.

Saying to protect the world, that this was her destiny.

The blood of a Dragon, of an existence that protected this world, tried to bind Ria.

“Seriously... what a horrible thing...”

A massacre that would even cause Stalin and Mao Zedong’s faces to pale. Perhaps as long as the human race existed, this choice would cause Ria’s name to be forever engraved in history.

Well, it wasn’t as though she chose to kill her own people, so at least she had that still.

At any rate, this story wouldn’t have a happy ending. It would likely be retold eternally as a tragedy.

“Ria.”

The one to prop Ria up by her shoulders was no other than Carla.

No matter what she said, Carla would be by her side. No matter what she did, she would protect her back.

“You know that I’ll understand if you ever get fed up with me, right?”

“That is the only thing that will never happen.”

In response to Carla’s smile, Ria smiled wryly.

# Chapter 112: The Great Collapse

“So why did it turn out like this?”

Guinevere put her hand against her head like she was trying to suppress a headache and groaned.

She was currently in a corner of the Manesh palace, it was a room where Guinevere would normally handle documents with one hand and hold tea to drink with another.

The men and women relaxing in whatever posture they felt like with no regards to their honor on the cushions that were placed on the ground were the source of her suffering.

Ria, Carla, and Guinevere herself were fine. Even Serge and Irina weren't unnatural in being there.

“Is there a problem?”

“A problem...”

It wasn't a problem, but why was this place being used as a place for the discussion?

“The place with the most involved people is Ogress, after all.”

The people Ria looked over to were: Ars, Shifaka, Thor, Labyrinth, and the four God Dragons.

Be it the excessively awe-inspiring lineup or the fact that the Dragonslayer was sitting together with the God Dragons, as expected, not even Guinevere had the composure to laugh it off.

“Moving somewhere else sounds annoying.”

The person to say that as she was relaxing and lying down was Fire Dragon Ohma. Although the other Dragons were maintaining postures that protected their majesty, they still agreed with Ohma.

“We're at a more light part of the conversation, so I think that some alcohol would be nice.”

The one to say that was, of all of them, Valis. It appears that Dragons being adept drinkers was true.

Ria instructed a court lady who was waiting on standby to have food and drinks prepared for them.

Their discussion in the meanwhile wasn't truly light, however.

They spoke of things like what to do once they came into contact with Earth by means of the Great Collapse and how to process immigration. Normally, things like this were to be discussed by all of the continent's rulers, but the people here were carefully selected with the intention of making it so that people with no knowledge concerning Earth would have a say in the discussion.

Ria, Serge, and Labyrinth had reincarnated from the Earth. Ars and Thor were summoned as Heroes. Shifaka was a representative as a human that had actually immigrated. Guinevere and Carla were representatives of the 'locals'.

"For now, let's give Japanese people top priority for immigration."

Ria proposed something that came from her own ego, but no one opposed it. Ars raised the cup in his hand and Thor nodded. Labyrinth drank her juice, but she didn't disagree either.

"Ah, I'm not trying to object, but I've been thinking about something for a while now."

Serge raised his hand and gave a question.

"Why are reincarnators and Heroes only ever Japanese?"

"There were people that weren't Japanese, too."

The one to say that was someone who had until now remained quiet, Shifaka.

"It was like that on other continents, but it seemed to be that there were only Japanese people remaining when I looked on this continent as well."

Regarding the reasoning for that, Ars spoke with a few speculations mixed in.

“This world is polytheistic, and on top of that, it has Dragons that are even stronger than Gods. Isn’t it that it won’t accept believers of Judaism or monotheistic religions?”

“Or maybe it won’t allow people that aren’t atheists?”

Thor offered a supplement. Both Buddhism and Hinduism appeared to have poor compatibilities with this world. It appeared that the majority of Japanese and atheists were easily accepted into the world.

“What about Communists then? I’d heard that you’d be treated like one of those on Earth if you said that you were an atheist.”

“Communists...”

Shifaka’s eyes looked distant. It was the same with Thor and Ars. Terrew clicked her tongue.

Just by seeing their reactions, Serge could understand somehow or another. [1]

Well, Communists did have a splendid ideal, at least.

“I think that we should accept poor immigrants from places like the United States first. In the beginning, their way of life will be agriculture and raising animals.”

Immigrants moving from the Demonlands would also support the immigrants from the Earth. It appeared that Ars had been thinking around those lines as well.

The discussion was basically only being done between the humans. The God Dragons were drinking out of glasses with alcohol in them, sometimes asking for opinions on various things.

There were many tricky problems on their agenda.

“What about the Imperial family...” [2]

The one to bring up this particularly complicated problem was Ria. Even Carla and Guinevere were unable to understand Japan’s governing system.

Moreover, even between Ria and the other former Japanese in the room,

there was a generation gap. Ria had lived as a Japanese person for forty-two years and had knew many people who held the Imperial family in high esteem. Meanwhile, the four others only barely recognized it as the symbol of Japan through textbooks.

“There is the Imperial family to think of, but is having them continue governing a good idea?”

Ars spoke, yet no conclusion was reached.

“If we’re going to talk about them, what about the Mecca, Jerusalem, and the Vatican?”

The formerly Japanese people held different views about Serge’s question. Carla and Guinevere could easily understand the problem since it had to do with religion, but they couldn’t understand monotheism itself. They went out of the way to explain the general outline of what Judaism, Christianity, and Islam was, but Carla and Guinevere, two people who didn’t hold any hostility to demons, could only see the religious as breeding grounds for racial discrimination.

Well, there was also a problem for the ones doing the explanation...

“For there to be only one God... what an arrogant concept.”

Guinevere spoke.

Carla, someone who actually knew the power of a God, would be considered an atheist on Earth. Even though she held the bloodline of a God.

It wasn’t that she simply didn’t accept the existence of Gods. She was an atheist in the sense that she wouldn’t allow their meddling.

Even so, their discussion branched out into further dicey topics.

“Oh yeah, there aren’t any blacks in this world, huh?”

Once again, Serge brought something up.

It was true, almost everyone looked European. It seemed like a lot of people did look oriental in the southeast though.

“Ah, that. It’s because of discrimination.”

Ars spoke while scratching his head.”

“You know how there are dark elves among demons yeah? Well, they have dark skin. So they were lumped in together with demons, so they’re over in the Demonlands now. Most humans in the Demonlands are black nowadays.”

The heck? Even in a world like this, one where Ria had thought to be a bit better than Earth, there was still racial discrimination based on skin color.

“No matter the world, there’s going to be discrimination, won’t there...”

The noticeably young Serge muttered that and everyone nodded in agreement.

\*

The meeting continued on and on for days.

Meanwhile, the God Dragons enjoyed themselves by getting drunk off of the alcohol... not...

Ars contacted the Demonlands with his phone, setting up the preparations for the acceptance of immigrants.

Tractors powered by mana. Lawnmowers powered by mana.

Steel factories powered by mana. Shipbuilding factories powered by mana.

Using mana left and right, Ars was bringing the Demonlands ever closer to the modern era. A few parts were even advancing beyond what science was at though.

“Could you make the internet?”

“I want to make the literacy rate be 100% first. There are still a mountainous tribes that don’t speak the common tongue yet.”

Ars took Serge’s request seriously and answered him.

“I also want a transportation network. I want to expand our rail network,



and we also have to construct and maintain roads... it should be more or less manageable thorough magic, though.”

The more he talked, the more they came to understand just how advanced the Demonlands were. It really was a great thing they didn't have to fight them.

“Could I use one of those Machine Gods?”

“You probably could... but they're pretty expensive to make. I'm using an orichalcum alloy for it anti-nuclear weapon armor, and there are only a few people who can manufacture its Magic Core. By the way, we have a lot of jets, too.”

“Oooh! A science victory!” [2][3]

They... probably had the war potential to fight against the entire world.

They'd even had the ability to purposely not damage Lemdria too much when they fought the country.

The meeting truly did continue for days. As various kings and rulers were contacted, new members appeared to join in.

Great Sage Alvis. Truthfully, he was the most plain-looking man among them.

But he was the Great Save of another continent and had managed it. Then, failing in its management, he had come to this continent with the few survivors in tow.

As someone who had migrated as an immigrant, his comments were definitely valuable. However, he would occasionally mix in his complaints. Rather, his complaints did nothing but become more common.

“Really, humans have to have existences better than themselves or they'll just turn into impudent, arrogant things.”

He, who'd reached over for one of the wine glasses offered to him by the God Dragons, started talking about his past with a still gaze.

He talked about how the continent he'd lived on managed the Soul Cycle in a different way than using Millenniums.

And how even so, it wasn't enough an ended up failing, causing him to bring the few remaining humans over to this continent on an ark.

According to him, if humans didn't have existences like the God Dragons, they would wind up forgetting their reverence towards nature.

He continued prattling on about philosophical things as he slowly grew dead drunk.

... What exactly did he come here for, again?

\*

The deadline Valis gave soon arrived.

On that day, it was a very typical morning with people doing their usual daily activities.

But the populace of each country was made to know of as much as possible through their representatives. What they could understand was next to nothing, though.

The God Dragons returned to their families, with humans, demi-humans, and demons all amassing their fighters and made tents the place where the Imperial Capital had once stood.

And in the center of it all was the Demon King... in a dogeza.

"I'm sorry..."

To say nothing of the humans and demi-humans, even the demons were looking at him with somewhat cold gazes. To say they were shocked would be an understatement.

"You... do you know what you've done!?"

The person to speak in such an angry voice was Shana. The former Hero was abused by one of his past comrades that had helped defeat the previous era's Demon King together with him.

Among those resigned gazes, the only one who looked uneasy was Ferna.

"Seriously... you know what situation we're all in..."

As for why even Ria was shocked, well, it's because a certain matter came to light so close to go-time.

Ferna was pregnant.

The father was this here Demon King-sama.

Ferna's fighting capability was considerably high even amongst those present. After all, she was a member of Black Cat, an organization that trained gifted children, since she was a child.

It was natural that there would be blame to place somewhere if something caused her to lose her ability to fight. And in the case of a pregnancy, that blame would mostly be held by the man.

"I have no face..."

There was no room for justification left to Ars, who continued with his dogeza earnestly. He himself probably knew that as well.

"No matter what we say, there's no changing what happened. Let's put her somewhere safe and have her give us support from the rear."

A constructive opinion coming from Carla, Ars gave off a relieved feeling.

"The baby will be Shinji's younger brother or sister, so let's keep her in Manesh."

Yes, Guinevere was there in that location, too.

Now that the mood had turned into something like a showdown between his former and current lovers, Ars pressed his head onto the ground even harder.

\*

Since teleportation magic had adverse affects on pregnant women, Guinevere and Ferna would fly to Ogress.

Ars finally got up and looked at the various demon officers with upturned eyes.

Even while sighing the senior officers all arranged themselves before

Ars.

Some people—like Asuka—were grumbling to themselves still, though.

“It’s almost time...”

Taking out his pocket watch, Shifaka muttered.

He was the only human among them that had experienced a Great Collapse. He looked up into the sky.

And then, the color of the sky shifted.

Blue. But not the blue a sky should be.

Like it had shaken dust off itself, it was a clear blue. Too clear.

“Ooh...”

People let out groans, as well as admiration. What stood out to them was another surface—another ground\* occupying the majority of the sky.

It was something that Ria had seen countless times in photos, it was the Earth.

Their atmospheres fully connected with each other, she could even see the landmasses clearly.

“Where is Japan...”

Ria muttered. The globe rotated slowly, showing off its appearance.

A chain of green islands on the vast blue waters. Finding it, Ria clenched her fists.

Aah, it was still there.

Japan was still there.

The two planets so close that they would normally have crashed into each other due to gravity, they kept their distance, still rotating.

The Great Collapse had begun.

\*

Footnotes:

1. I can't really say I understand what happened over these past four lines. Translating it? Fine. Understanding wtf happened? Nope.
2. Ria says "What to we do about Those Who Never Cease?" It's a way to describe certain nobles. In modern Japan, it is generally only used to refer to the Imperial family.
3. Sid Meyer's Civilization game series reference.

# Credits

Translator: [Ziru's Musings](#)

Epub: [Estevam](#) / [dotNOVEL](#)